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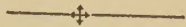
THE TOILERS OF THE SEA



College of the Pacific
Stockton, Calif.

THE

NOVELS OF VICTOR HUGO.



TOILERS OF THE SEA.

NINETY-THREE.

*PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED WITH ELEGANT
WOOD ENGRAVINGS.*



VOLUME IV.



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LIST OF CONTENTS.—TOILERS OF THE SEA.

FIRST PART.

SIEUR CLUBIN.

BOOK I.—THE HISTORY OF A BAD REPUTATION.

I.—A Word written on a White Page	5
II.—The Bû de la Rue.	6
III.—For your Wife: when you Marry	8
IV.—An Unpopular Man	10
V.—More suspicious Facts about Gilliatt	15
VI.—The Dutch Sloop	16
VII.—A fit Tenant for a Haunted House	19
VIII.—The Gild-Holm-Ur Seat	21

BOOK II.—MESS LETHIERRY.

I.—A Troubled Life, but a Quiet Conscience	22
II.—A certain Predilection.	23
III.—Mess Lethierry's vulnerable Part	24

BOOK III.—DURANDE AND DÉRUCHETTE.

I.—Prattle and Smoke	25
II.—The Old Story of Utopia	27
III.—Rantaine	28
IV.—Continuation of the Story of Utopia	29
V.—The Devil Boat	31
VI.—Lethierry's Exaltation	32
VII.—The same Godfather and the same Patron Saint	33
VIII.—Bonnie Dundee	34
IX.—The Man who discovered Rantaine's Character	36
X.—Long Yarns	37
XI.—Matrimonial Prospects	38
XII.—An Anomaly in the Character of Lethierry	39
XIII.—Thoughtlessness adds a Grace to Beauty.	41

BOOK IV.—THE BAGPIPE.

I.—Streaks of Fire in the Horizon	42
II.—The Unknown unfolds itself by Degrees.	43
III.—The air "Bonnie Dundee" finds an Echo on the Hill.	44

IV.—"A serenade by night may please a lady fair, But of uncle and of guardian let the troubadour beware."	
--	--

Unpublished Comedy. 44

V.—A deserved Success has always its Detractors	46
VI.—The sloop Cashmere saves a Shipwrecked Crew	46
VII.—How an Idler had the Good Fortune to be seen by a Fisherman	47

BOOK V.—THE REVOLVER.

I.—Conversations at the Jean Auberge	49
II.—Clubin observes some one	52
III.—Clubin carries away something and brings back nothing	54
IV.—Pleinmont	55
V.—The Birds'-nesters	58
VI.—The Jacressade	64
VII.—Nocturnal Buyers and Mysterious Sellers	68
VIII.—A "Cannon" off the Red Ball and the Black	70
IX.—Useful Information for Persons who expect or fear the Arrival of Letters from beyond Sea	75

BOOK VI.—THE DRUNKEN STEERSMAN AND THE SOBER CAPTAIN.

I.—The Douvres	77
II.—An unexpected Flask of Brandy	78
III.—Conversations interrupted.	80
IV.—Captain Clubin displays all his great Qualities	84
V.—Clubin reaches the Crowning-point of Glory	86
VI.—The Interior of an Abyss suddenly revealed	89
VII.—An unexpected Dénouement	92

BOOK VII.—THE DANGER OF OPENING A BOOK AT RANDOM.

I.—The Pearl at the Foot of a Precipice	95
II.—Much Astonishment on the Western Coast	99
III.—A Quotation from the Bible	102

SECOND PART.

BOOK I.—MALICIOUS GILLIATT.

I.—The Place which is easy to reach, but difficult to leave again	106
II.—A Catalogue of Disasters	109
III.—Sound; but not safe.	110
IV.—A Preliminary Survey	111
V.—A Word upon the Secret Co-operations of the Elements	113
VI.—A Stable for the Horse	115
VII.—A Chamber for the Voyager	116
VIII.—Importunæque volucres	120
IX.—The Rock, and how Gilliatt used it	121
X.—The Forge	123
XI.—Discovery	125
XII.—The Interior of an Edifice under the Sea.	127
XIII.—What was seen there; and what perceived dimly	128

BOOK II.—THE LABOR.

I.—The Resources of one who has nothing	131
II.—Preparations	132
III.—Gilliatt's Masterpiece comes to the Rescue of Lethierry	133
IV.—Sub Re	135
V.—Sub Umbra	137
VI.—Gilliatt places the Sloop in readiness	138
VII.—Sudden Danger	140
VIII.—Movement rather than Progress	141
IX.—A Slip between Cup and Lip	143
X.—Sea-warnings	144
XI.—Murmurs in the Air	146

BOOK III.—THE STRUGGLE.

I.—Extremes meet	147
II.—The Ocean Winds	148

III.—The Noises explained	150
IV.—Turba Turma	151
V.—Gilliatt's Alternatives	153
VI.—The Combat	153

BOOK IV.—PITFALLS IN THE WAY.

I.—He who is Hungry is not alone	163
II.—The Monster	166
III.—Another kind of Sea-combat	170
IV.—Nothing is hidden; nothing lost	171
V.—The Fatal Difference between Six Inches and Two Feet	173
VI.—De Profundis ad Altum	175
VII.—The Appeal is heard	178

THIRD PART.

BOOK I.—NIGHT AND THE MOON.

I.—The Harbor Clock	180
II.—The Harbor Bell again	187

BOOK II.—GRATITUDE AND DESPOTISM.

I.—Joy Surrounded by Tortures	191
II.—The Leathern Trunk	196

BOOK III.—THE DEPARTURE OF THE CASHMERE.

I.—The Havelet near the Church	197
II.—Despair confronts Despair	199
III.—The Forethought of Self-sacrifice	203
IV.—"For your Wife" when you Marry	205
V.—The Great Tomb	207

NINETY-THREE 215

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

TOILERS OF THE SEA.

FRONTISPIECE.		Gilliatt, the Malicious	112
Gilliatt and his Mother	10	Gilliatt in the Phosphorescent Sea	145
He pulled the Foot of the Sleeping Man	48	The Skeleton was partly buried in this Heap	172
The Monster	106	Déruchette in the Garden	186

NINETY-THREE.

Halt	216	Charlotte Corday killing Marat	352
The Corvette "Claymore"	222	The Massacre of St. Bartholomew	362
Halmalo	243	Whoever wished could Eat and Drink	381
Cimourdain	267	Preparing for the Attack	382
The Convention	287	After the Victory the Combat Begins.	408
Desmoulin and Danton at the Scaffold	306	When the Sun Rose	430

TOILERS OF THE SEA.

I Dedicate this Book

TO THE

ROCK OF HOSPITALITY AND LIBERTY,

TO THAT PORTION OF OLD NORMAN GROUND

INHABITED BY

THE NOBLE LITTLE NATION OF THE SEA:

TO THE ISLAND OF GUERNSEY,

SEVERE YET KIND, MY PRESENT ASYLUM,

PERHAPS MY TOMB.

V. H.

PREFACE.

Religion, Society, and Nature! these are the three struggles of man. They constitute at the same time his three needs. He has need of a faith; hence the temple. He must create; hence the city. He must live; hence the plough and the ship. But these three solutions comprise three perpetual conflicts. The mysterious difficulty of life results from all three. Man strives with obstacles under the form of superstition, under the form of prejudice, and under the form of the elements. A triple *ἀνάγκη* weighs upon us. There is the fatality of dogmas, the oppression of human laws, the inexorability of nature. In "*Notre Dame de Paris*" the author denounced the first; in the "*Misérables*" he exemplified the second; in this book he indicates the third. With these three fatalities mingles that inward fatality—the supreme *ἀνάγκη*, the human heart.

HAUTEVILLE HOUSE:

March, 1860.

FIRST PART. *SIEUR CLUBIN.*

BOOK I.

THE HISTORY OF A BAD REPUTATION.

I.

A WORD WRITTEN ON A WHITE PAGE.

CHRISTMAS DAY in the year 182— was somewhat remarkable in the Island of Guernsey. Snow fell on that day. In the Channel Islands a frosty winter is uncommon, and a fall of snow is an event.

On that Christmas morning, the road which skirts the seashore from St. Peter's Port to the Vale was clothed in white. From midnight till the break of day the snow had been falling. Towards nine o'clock, a little after the rising of the wintry sun, as it was too early yet for the Church of England folks to go to St. Sampson's, or for the Wesleyans to repair to Eldad Chapel, the road was almost deserted. Throughout that portion of the highway which separates the first from the second tower, only three foot-passengers could be seen. These were a child, a man, and a woman. Walking at a distance from each other, these wayfarers had no visible connection. The child, a boy of about eight years old, had stopped, and was looking curiously at the wintry scene. The man walked behind the woman, at a distance of about a hundred paces. Like her he was coming from the direction of the church of St. Sampson. The appearance of the man, who was still young, was something between that of a workman and a sailor. He wore his working-day clothes,

—a kind of Guernsey shirt of coarse brown stuff, and trousers partly concealed by tarpaulin leggings,—a costume which seemed to indicate that, notwithstanding the holy day, he was going to no place of worship. His heavy shoes of rough leather, with their soles covered with large nails, left upon the snow, as he walked, a print more like that of a prison lock than the foot of a man. The woman, on the contrary, was evidently dressed for church. She wore a large mantle of black silk, wadded, under which she had coquettishly adjusted a dress of Irish poplin, trimmed alternately with white and pink; but for her red stockings, she might have been taken for a Parisian. She walked on with a light and free step, so little suggestive of the burden of life that it might easily be seen that she was young. Her movements possessed that subtle grace which indicates the most delicate of all transitions,—that soft intermingling, as it were, of two twilights,—the passage from the condition of a child to that of womanhood. The man seemed to take no heed of her.

Suddenly, near a group of oaks at the corner of a field, and at the spot called the Basses Maisons, she turned, and the movement seemed to attract the attention of the man. She stopped, seemed to reflect a moment, then stooped, and the man fancied that he could discern that she was tracing with her finger some letters in the snow. Then she rose again, went on her way at a quicker pace, turned once more, this time smiling, and disappeared to the left of the roadway, by the footpath under the hedges which leads to the Ivy Castle. When she had turned for the second time, the man had recognized her as *Déruchette*, a charming girl of that neighborhood.

The man felt no need of quickening his pace; and some minutes later he found himself near the group of oaks. Already he had ceased to think of the vanished *Déruchette*; and if, at that moment, a porpoise had appeared above the water, or a robin had caught his eye in the hedges, it is probable that he would have passed on his way. But it happened that his eyes were fixed upon the ground; his gaze fell mechanically upon the spot where the

girl had stopped. Two little footprints were there plainly visible; and beside them he read this word, evidently written by her in the snow—

“GILLIATT.”

It was his own name.

He lingered for awhile motionless, looking at the letters, the little footprints, and the snow; and then walked on, evidently in a thoughtful mood.

II.

THE BU DE LA RUE.

GILLIATT lived in the parish of St. Sampson. He was not liked by his neighbors; and there were reasons for that fact.

To begin with, he lived in a queer kind of “haunted” dwelling. In the islands of Jersey and Guernsey, sometimes in the country, but often in streets with many inhabitants, you will come upon a house the entrance to which is completely barricaded. Holly bushes obstruct the doorway, hideous boards, with nails, conceal the windows below; while the casements of the upper stories are neither closed nor open: for all the window-frames are barred, but the glass is broken. If there is a little yard, grass grows between its stones; and the parapet of its wall is crumbling away. If there is a garden, it is choked with nettles, brambles, and hemlock, and strange insects abound in it. The chimneys are cracked, the roof is falling in; so much as can be seen from without of the rooms presents a dismantled appearance. The woodwork is rotten; the stone mildewed. The paper of the walls has dropped away and hangs loose, until it presents a history of the bygone fashions of paper-hangings—the scrawling patterns of the time of the Empire, the crescent-shaped draperies of the Directory, the balustrades and pillars of the days of Louis XVI. The thick draperies of cobwebs, filled with flies, indicate the quiet reign long enjoyed by innumerable spiders. Sometimes a broken jug may be noticed on a shelf. Such houses are considered to be haunted. Satan is popularly believed to visit them

by night. Houses are like the human beings who inhabit them. They become to their former selves what the corpse is to the living body. A superstitious belief among the people is sufficient to reduce them to this state of death. Then their aspect is terrible. These ghostly houses are common in the Channel Islands.

The rural and maritime populations are easily moved with notions of the active agency of the powers of evil. Among the Channel Isles, and on the neighboring coast of France, the ideas of the people on this subject are deeply rooted. In their view, Beelzebub has his ministers in all parts of the earth. It is certain that Belphegor is the ambassador from the infernal regions in France, Hutgin in Italy, Belial in Turkey, Thamuz in Spain, Martinet in Switzerland, and Mammon in England. Satan is an Emperor just like any other: a sort of Satan Caesar. His establishment is well organized. Dagon is grand almoner, Succor Benoth chief of the Eunuchs; Asmodeus, banker at the gaming-table; Kobal, manager of the theatre, and Verdelet grand-master of the ceremonies. Nybbas is the court-fool; Wierus, a savant, a good strylogue, and a man of much learning in demonology, calls Nybbas the great parodist.

The Norman fishermen, who frequent the Channel, have many precautions to take at sea, by reason of the illusions with which Satan environs them. It has long been an article of popular faith, that Saint Maclou inhabited the great square rock called Ortach, in the sea between Aurigny and the Casquets; and many old sailors used to declare that they had often seen him there, seated and reading in a book. Accordingly the sailors, as they passed, were in the habit of kneeling many times before the Ortach rock, until the day when the fable was destroyed, and the truth took its place. For it has been discovered, and is now well established, that the lonely inhabitant of the rock is not a saint, but a devil. This evil spirit, whose name is Jochmus, had the impudence to pass himself off, for many centuries, as Saint Maclou. Even the Church herself is not proof against snares of this kind. The

demons Raguhel, Oribel, and Tobiel, were regarded as saints until the year 745; when Pope Zachary, having at length exposed them, turned them out of saintly company. This sort of weeding of the saintly calendar is certainly very useful; but it can only be practiced by very accomplished judges of devils and their ways.

The old inhabitants of these parts relate —though all this refers to bygone times— that the Catholic population of the Norman Archipelago was once, though quite involuntarily, even in more intimate correspondence with the powers of darkness than the Huguenots themselves. How this happened, however, we do not pretend to say; but it is certain that the people suffered considerable annoyance from this cause. It appears that Satan had taken a fancy to the Catholics, and sought their company a good deal; a circumstance which has given rise to the belief that the devil is more Catholic than Protestant. One of his most insufferable familiarities consisted in paying nocturnal visits to married Catholics in bed just at the moment when the husband had fallen fast asleep, and the wife had begun to doze; a fruitful source of domestic trouble. Patouillet was of opinion that a faithful biography of Voltaire ought not to be without some allusion to this practice of the evil one. The truth of all this is perfectly well known, and described in the forms of excommunication in the rubric *de erroribus nocturnis et de semine diabolorum*. The practice was raging particularly at St. Helier's towards the end of the last century, probably as a punishment for the Revolution; for the evil consequences of revolutionary excesses are incalculable. However this may have been, it is certain that this possibility of a visit from the demon at night, when it is impossible to see distinctly, or even in slumber, caused much embarrassment among orthodox dames. The idea of giving to the world a Voltaire was by no means a pleasant one. One of these, in some anxiety, consulted her confessor on this extremely difficult subject, and the best mode for timely discovery of the cheat. The confessor replied, "In order to be sure that it is your husband by your

side, and not a demon, place your hand upon his head. If you find horns, you may be sure there is something wrong." But this test was far from satisfactory to the worthy dame.

Gilliatt's house had been haunted, but it was no longer in that condition; it was for that reason, however, only regarded with more suspicion. No one learned in demonology can be unaware of the fact, that when a sorcerer has installed himself in a haunted dwelling, the devil considers the house sufficiently occupied, and is polite enough to abstain from visiting there, unless called in, like the doctor, on some special occasion.

This house was known by the name of the Bû de la Rue. It was situated at the extremity of a little promontory, rather of rock than of land, forming a small harborage apart in the creek of Houmet Paradis. The water at this spot is deep. The house stood quite alone upon the point, almost separated from the island, and with just sufficient ground about it for a small garden, which was sometimes inundated by the high tides. Between the port of St. Sampson and the creek of Houmet Paradis, rises a steep hill, surmounted by the block of towers covered with ivy, and known as Vale Castle or the Château de l'Archange; so that, at St. Sampson, the Bû de la Rue was shut out from sight.

Nothing is commoner than sorcerers in Guernsey. They exercise their profession in certain parishes, in profound indifference to the enlightenment of the nineteenth century. Some of their practices are downright criminal. They set gold boiling, they gather herbs at midnight, they cast sinister looks upon the people's cattle. When the people consult them they send for bottles containing "water of the sick," and they are heard to mutter mysteriously, "the water has a sad look." In March, 1857, one of them discovered, in water of this kind, seven demons. They are universally feared. Another only lately bewitched a baker "as well as his oven." Another had the diabolical wickedness to wafer and seal up envelopes "containing nothing inside." Another went so far as

to have on a shelf three bottles labelled "B." These monstrous facts are well authenticated. Some of these sorcerers are obliging, and for two or three guineas will take on themselves the complaint from which you are suffering. Then they are seen to roll upon their beds, and to groan with pain; and while they are in these agonies the believer exclaims, "There! I am well again." Others cure all kinds of diseases by merely tying a handkerchief round their patients' loins, a remedy so simple that it is astonishing that no one had yet thought of it. In the last century, the Cour Royale of Guernsey bound such folks upon a heap of fagots and burnt them alive. In these days it condemns them to eight weeks' imprisonment; four weeks on bread and water, and the remainder of the term in solitary confinement. *Amant alterna catenæ.*

The last instance of burning sorcerers in Guernsey took place in 1474. The city authorities devoted one of its squares, the Carrefour du Bordage, to that ceremony. Between 1565 and 1700, eleven sorcerers thus suffered at this spot. As a rule the criminals made confession of their guilt. The Carrefour de Bordage has indeed rendered many other services to society and religion. It was here that heretics were brought to the stake. Under Queen Mary, among other Huguenots burnt here, were a mother and two daughters. The name of this mother was Perrotine Massy. One of the daughters was *enceinte*, and was delivered of a child even in the midst of the flames. As the old chronicle expresses it, "*Son ventre éclata.*" The new-born infant rolled out of the fiery furnace. A man named House took it in his arms; but Helier Gosselin the bailli, like a good Catholic as he was, sternly commanded the child to be cast again into the fire.

III.

FOR YOUR WIFE: WHEN YOU MARRY.

WE must return to Gilliatt.

The country people told how, towards the close of the great Revolution, a woman, bringing with her a little child, came to

live in Guernsey. She was an English-woman; at least, she was not French. She had a name which the Guernsey pronunciation and the country folks' bad spelling had finally converted into "Gilliatt." She lived alone with the child, which, according to some, was a nephew; according to others, a son; according to others, again, a strange child whom she was protecting. She had some means; enough to struggle on in a poor way. She had purchased a small plot of ground at La Sergentée, and another at La Roque Crespel, near Rocquaine. The house of the Bû de la Rue was haunted at this period. For more than thirty years no one had inhabited it. It was falling into ruins. The garden, so often invaded by the sea, could produce nothing. Besides noises and lights seen there at night-time, the house had this mysterious peculiarity: any one who should leave there in the evening, upon the mantel-piece, a ball of worsted, a few needles, and a plate filled with soup, would assuredly find, in the morning, the soup consumed, the plate empty, and a pair of mittens ready knitted. The house, demon included, was offered for sale for a few pounds sterling. The stranger woman became the purchaser, evidently tempted by the devil, or by the advantageous bargain.

She did more than purchase the house; she took up her abode there with the child; and from that moment peace reigned within its walls. The Bû de la Rue has found a fit tenant, said the country people. The haunting ceased. There was no longer any light seen there, save that of the tallow candle of the new comer. "Witch's candle is as good as devil's torch." The proverb satisfied the gossips of the neighborhood.

The woman cultivated some acres of land which belonged to her. She had a good cow, of the sort which produces yellow butter. She gathered her white beans, cauliflowers, and "Golden drop" potatoes. She sold, like other people, her parsnips by the tonneau, her onions by the hundred, and her beans by the denere. She did not go herself to market, but disposed of her crops through the agency of Guilbert Falliot, at the sign of the Abreuteurs of Saint Samp-

son. The register of Falliot bears evidence that Falliot sold for her, on one occasion, as much as twelve bushels of rare early potatoes.

The house had been meanly repaired; but sufficiently to make it habitable. It was only in very bad weather that the rain-drops found their way through the ceilings of the rooms. The interior consisted of a ground-floor suite of rooms, and a granary overhead. The ground-floor was divided into three rooms; two for sleeping, and one for meals. A ladder connected it with the granary above. The woman attended to the kitchen and taught the child to read. She did not go to church or chapel, which, all things considered, led to the conclusion that she must be French not to go to a place of worship. The circumstance was grave. In short, the new comers were a puzzle to the neighborhood.

That the woman was French seemed probable. Volcanoes cast forth stones, and revolutions men, so families are removed to distant places; human beings come to pass their lives far from their native homes; groups of relatives and friends disperse and decay; strange people fall, as it were, from the clouds—some in Germany, some in England, some in America. The people of the country view them with surprise and curiosity. Whence come these strange faces? Yonder mountain, smoking with revolutionary fires, casts them out. These barren *aérolites*, these famished and ruined people, these foot-balls of destiny, are known as refugees, *émigrés*, adventurers. If they sojourn among strangers, they are tolerated; if they depart, there is a feeling of relief. Sometimes these wanderers are harmless, inoffensive people, strangers—at least, as regards the women—to the events which have led to their exile, objects of persecution, helpless and astonished at their fate. They take root again somewhere as they can. They have done no harm to any one, and scarcely comprehend the destiny that has befallen them. So thus I have seen a poor tuft of grass uprooted and carried away by the explosion of a mine. No great explosion was ever followed by more of such strays than the first French Revolution.

The strange woman whom the Guernsey folks called "Gilliatt" was, possibly, one of these human strays.

The woman grew older; the child became a youth. They lived alone and avoided by all; but they were sufficient for each other. *Louve et louveteau se pourlèchent.* This was another of the generous proverbs which the neighborhood applied to them. Meanwhile, the youth grew to manhood; and then, as the old and withered bark falls from the tree, the mother died. She left to her son the little field of Sergentée, the small property called La Roque Crespel, and the house known as the Bû de la Rue; with the addition, as the official inventory said, of "one hundred guineas in gold in the *pid d'une cauche*, that is to say, in the foot of a stocking." The house was already sufficiently furnished with two oaken chests, two beds, six chairs and a table, besides necessary household utensils. Upon a shelf were some books, and in the corner a trunk, by no means of a mysterious character, which had to be opened for the inventory. This trunk was of drab leather, ornamented with brass nails and little stars of white metal, and it contained a bride's outfit, new and complete, of beautiful Dunkirk linen,—chemises, and petticoats, and some silk dresses,—with a paper on which was written, in the handwriting of the deceased,—

"For your wife: when you marry."

The loss of his mother was a terrible blow for the young man. His disposition had always been unsociable; he became now moody and sullen. The solitude around him was complete. Hitherto it had been mere isolation; now his life was a blank. While we have only one companion, life is endurable; left alone, it seems as if it is impossible to struggle on, and we fall back in the race, which is the first sign of despair. As time rolls on, however, we discover that duty is a series of compromises; we contemplate life, regard its end, and submit; but it is a submission which makes the heart bleed.

Gilliatt was young; and his wound healed with time. At that age sorrows cannot be lasting. His sadness, disappearing by slow degrees, seemed to min-

gle itself with the scenes around him, to draw him more and more towards the face of nature, and further and further from the need of social converse; and, finally, to assimilate his spirit more completely to the solitude in which he lived.

IV.

AN UNPOPULAR MAN.

GILLIATT, as we have said, was not popular in the parish. Nothing could be more natural than that antipathy among his neighbors. The reasons for it were abundant. To begin with, as we have already explained, there was the strange house he lived in; then there was his mysterious origin. Who could that woman have been? and what was the meaning of this child? Country people do not like mysteries, when they relate to strange sojourners among them. Then his clothes were the clothes of a workman, while he had, although certainly not rich, sufficient to live without labor. Then there was his garden, which he succeeded in cultivating, and from which he produced crops of potatoes, in spite of the stormy equinoxes; and then there were the big books which he kept upon a shelf, and read from time to time.

More reasons: why did he live that solitary life? The Bû de la Rue was a kind of lazaretto, in which Gilliatt was kept in a sort of moral quarantine. This, in the popular judgment, made it quite simple that people should be astonished at his isolation, and should hold him responsible for the solitude which society had made around his home.

He never went to chapel. He often went out at night-time. He held converse with sorcerers. He had been seen, on one occasion, sitting on the grass with an expression of astonishment on his features. He haunted the druidical stones of the An-cresse, and the fairy caverns which are scattered about in that part. It was generally believed that he had been seen politely saluting the Roque qui Chante, or Crowing Rock. He bought all birds which people brought to him, and having bought them, set them at liberty. He was civil

to the worthy folks in the streets of Saint Sampson, but willingly turned out of his way to avoid them if he could. He often went out on fishing expeditions, and always returned with fish. He trimmed his garden on Sundays. He had a bagpipe which he had bought from one of the Highland soldiers who are sometimes in Guernsey, and on which he played occasionally at twilight, on the rocks by the seashore. He had been seen to make strange gestures, like those of one sowing seeds. What kind of treatment could be expected for a man like that?

As regards the books left by the deceased woman, which he was in the habit of reading, the neighbors were particularly suspicious. The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, rector of St. Sampson, when he visited the house at the time of the woman's funeral, had read on the backs of these books the titles "Rosier's Dictionary," "Candide," by Voltaire, "Advice to the People on Health," by Tissot. A French noble, an émigré, who had retired to St. Sampson, remarked that this Tissot "must have been the Tissot who carried the head of the Princess de Lamballe upon a pike."

The Reverend gentleman had also remarked upon one of these books the highly fantastic and terribly significant title, "*De Rhubarbaro*."

In justice to Gilliatt, however, it must be added that this volume being in Latin—a language which it is doubtful if he understood—the young man had possibly never read it.

But it is just those books which a man possesses, but does not read, which constitute the most suspicious evidence against him. The Spanish Inquisition have deliberated on that point, and have come to a conclusion which places the matter beyond further doubt.

The book in question, however, was no other than the Treatise of Doctor Tilingius upon the Rhubarb plant, published in Germany in 1679.

It was by no means certain that Gilliatt did not prepare philters and unholy decoctions. He was undoubtedly in possession of certain phials.

Why did he walk abroad at evening, and

sometimes even at midnight, on the cliffs? Evidently to hold converse with the evil spirits who, by night, frequent the seashores, enveloped in smoke.

On one occasion he had aided a witch at Torteval to clean her chaise: this was an old woman named Moutonne Gahy.

When a census was taken in the island, in answer to a question about his calling, he replied, "Fisherman; when there are fish to catch." Imagine yourself in the place of Gilliatt's neighbors, and admit that there is something unpleasant in answers like this.

Poverty and wealth are comparative terms. Gilliatt had some fields and a house, his own property; compared with those who had nothing, he was not poor. One day, to test this, and perhaps also as a step towards a correspondence—for there are base women who would marry a demon for the sake of riches—a young girl of the neighborhood said to Gilliatt, "When are you going to take a wife, neighbor?" He answered, "I will take a wife when the Roque qui Chante takes a husband."

This Roque qui Chante is a great stone, standing in a field near Mons. Leméziur de Fry's. It is a stone of a highly suspicious character. No one knows what deeds are done around it. At times you may hear there a cock crowing, when no cock is near—an extremely disagreeable circumstance. Then it is commonly asserted that this stone was originally placed in the field by the elfin people known as *Sarregousets*, who are the same as the *Sins*.

At night, when it thunders, if you should happen to see men flying in the lurid light of the clouds, or on the rolling waves of the air, these are no other than the *Sarregousets*. A woman who lives at the Grand Mielles knows them well. One evening, when some *Sarregousets* happened to be assembled at a cross-road, this woman cried out to a man with a cart, who did not know which route to take, "Ask them your way. They are civil folks, and always ready to direct a stranger." There can be little doubt that this woman was a sorceress.

The learned and judicious King James I. had women of this kind boiled, and then

tasting the water of the cauldron, was able to say from its flavor, "That was a sorceress;" or "That was not one."

It is to be regretted that the kings of these latter days no longer possess a talent which placed in so strong a light the utility of monarchical institutions.

It was not without substantial grounds that Gilliatt lived in this odor of sorcery. One midnight, during a storm, Gilliatt being at sea alone in a bark, on the coast by La Sommeilleuse, he was heard to ask—

"Is there a passage sufficient for me?"

And a voice cried from the heights above:

"Passage enough: steer boldly."

To whom could he have been speaking, if not to those who replied to him? This seems something like evidence.

Another time, one stormy evening, when it was so dark that nothing could be distinguished, Gilliatt was near the Catiau Roque—a double row of rocks where witches, goats, and other diabolical creatures assemble and dance on Fridays—and here, it is firmly believed, that the voice of Gilliatt was heard mingling in the following terrible conversation:—

"How is Vesin Brovard?" (This was a mason who had fallen from the roof of a house.)

"He is getting better."

"Ver dia! he fell from a greater height than that of yonder peak. It is delightful to think that he was not dashed to pieces."

"Our folks had a fine time for the sea-weed gathering last week."

"Ay, finer than to-day."

"I believe you. There will be little fish at the market to-day."

"It blows too hard."

"They can't lower their nets."

"How is Catherine?"

"She is charming."

Catherine was evidently the name of a Sarregouset.

According to all appearance, Gilliatt had business on hand at night: at least none doubted it.

Sometimes he was seen with a pitcher in his hand, pouring water on the ground. Now water, cast upon the ground, is known to make a shape like that of devils.

On the road to St. Sampson, opposite

the Martello tower, number 1, stand three stones, arranged in the form of steps. Upon the platform of those stones, now empty, stood anciently a cross, or perhaps a gallows. These stones are full of evil influences.

Staid and worthy people, and perfectly credible witnesses, testified to having seen Gilliatt at this spot conversing with a toad. Now there are no toads at Guernsey. The share of Guernsey in the reptiles of the Channel Isles consisting exclusively of the snakes. It is Jersey that has all the toads. This toad, then, must have swum from the neighboring island, in order to hold converse with Gilliatt. The converse was of a friendly kind.

These facts were clearly established; and the proof is that the three stones are there to this day. Those who doubt it, may go and see them; and at a little distance, there is also a house on which the passer-by may read this inscription:—

"DEALER IN CATTLE, ALIVE AND DEAD, OLD CORDAGE, IRON, BONES, AND TOBACCO FOR CHEWING, PROMPT PAYMENT FOR GOODS, AND EVERY ATTENTION GIVEN TO ORDERS."

A man must be sceptical indeed to contest the existence of those stones, and of the house in question. Now both these circumstances were injurious to the reputation of Gilliatt.

Only the most ignorant are unaware of the fact that the greatest danger of the coasts of the Channel Islands is the King of the Auxcriniers. No inhabitant of the seas is more redoubtable. Whoever has seen him is certain to be wrecked between one St. Michael and the other. He is little, being in fact a dwarf; and is deaf, in his quality of king. He knows the names of all those who have been drowned in the seas, and the spots where they lie. He has a profound knowledge of that great graveyard which stretches far and wide beneath the waters of the ocean. A head, massive in the lower part and narrow in the forehead; a squat and corpulent figure; a skull, covered with warty excrescences; long legs, long arms, fins for feet, claws for hands, and a sea-green countenance; such are the chief character-

istics of this king of the waves. His claws have palms like hands; his fins human nails. Imagine a spectral fish with the face of a human being. No power could check his career unless he could be exorcised, or mayhap, fished up from the sea. Meanwhile he continues his sinister operations. Nothing is more unpleasant than an interview with this monster: amid the rolling waves and breakers, or in the thick of the mist, the sailor perceives, sometimes, a strange creature with a beetle brow, wide nostrils, flattened ears, an enormous mouth, gap-toothed jaws, peaked eyebrows, and great grinning eyes. When the lightning is livid, he appears red; when it is purple, he looks wan. He has a stiff spreading beard, running with water, and overlapping a sort of pelerine, ornamented with fourteen shells, seven before and seven behind. These shells are curious to those who are learned in conchology. The King of the Auxcriniers is only seen in stormy seas. He is the terrible harbinger of the tempest. His hideous form traces itself in the fog, in the squall, in the tempest of rain. His breast is hideous. A coat of scales covers his sides like a vest. He rises above the waves which fly before the wind, twisting and curling like thin shavings of wood beneath the carpenter's plane. Then his entire form issues out of the foam, and if there should happen to be in the horizon any vessels in distress, pale in the twilight, or his face lighted up with a sinister smile, he dances terrible and uncouth to behold. It is an evil omen indeed to meet him on a voyage.

At the period when the people of Saint Sampson were particularly excited on the subject of Gilliatt, the last persons who had seen the King of the Auxcriniers declared that his pelerine was now ornamented with only thirteen shells. Thirteen! He was only the more dangerous. But what had become of the fourteenth? Had he given it to some one? No one would say positively; and folks confined themselves to conjecture. But it was an undoubted fact that a certain Mons. Lupin Mabier, of Godaines, a man of property, paying a good sum to the land tax, was

ready to depose on oath, that he had once seen in the hands of Gilliatt a very remarkable kind of shell.

It was not uncommon to hear dialogues like the following among the country-people:—"I have a fine bull here, neighbor, what do you say?"

"Very fine, neighbor?"

"It is a fact, tho' 'tis I who say it; he is better though for fallow than for meat."

"Vér dia!"

"Are you sure that Gilliatt hasn't cast his eye upon it?"

Gilliatt would stop sometimes beside a field where some laborers were assembled, or near gardens in which gardeners were engaged, and would perhaps hear these mysterious words:

"When the *mors du diable* flourishes, reap the winter rye."

(The *mors du diable* is the scabwort plant.)

"The ash tree is coming out in leaf. There will be no more frost."

"Summer solstice, thistle in flower."

"If it rain not in June, the wheat will turn white. Look out for mildew."

"When the wild cherry appears, beware of the full moon."

"If the weather on the sixth day of the new moon is like that of the fourth, or like that of the fifth day, it will be the same nine times out of twelve in the first case, and eleven times out of twelve in the second, during the whole month."

"Keep your eye on neighbors who go to law with you. Beware of malicious influences. A pig which has had warm milk given to it will die. A cow which has had its teeth rubbed with leeks will eat no more."

"Spawning time with the smelts; beware of fevers."

"When frogs begin to appear, sow your melons."

"When the liverwort flowers, sow your barley."

"When the limes are in bloom, mow the meadows."

"When the elm-tree flowers, open the hot-bed frames."

"When tobacco fields are in blossom, close your green-houses."

And, fearful to relate, these occult precepts were not without truth. Those who put faith in them could vouch for the fact.

One night, in the month of June, when Gilliatt was playing upon his bagpipe, upon the sand-hills on the shore of the Demie de Fontenelle, it had happened that the mackerel fishing had failed.

One evening, at low water, it came to pass that a cart filled with sea-weed for manure overturned on the beach, in front of Gilliatt's house. It is most probable that he was afraid of being brought before the magistrates, for he took considerable trouble in helping to raise the cart, and he filled it again himself.

A little neglected child of the neighborhood being troubled with vermin, he had gone himself to St. Peter's Port, and had returned with an ointment, with which he rubbed the child's head. Thus Gilliatt had removed the pest from the poor child, which was an evidence that Gilliatt himself had originally given it; for everybody knows that there is a certain charm for getting vermin to people.

Gilliatt was suspected of looking into wells—a dangerous practice with those who have an evil eye; and, in fact, at Arculons, near St. Peter's Port, the water of a well became unwholesome. The good woman to whom this well belonged said to Gilliatt:

"Look here, at this water;" and she showed him a glassful. Gilliatt acknowledged it.

"The water is thick," he said; "that is true."

The good woman, who dreaded him in her heart, said, "Make it sweet again for me."

Gilliatt asked her some questions: whether she had a stable? whether the stable had a drain? whether the gutter of the drain did not pass near the well? The good woman replied "Yes." Gilliatt went into the stable; worked at the drain; turned the gutter in another direction; and the water became pure again. People in the country round might think what they pleased. A well does not become foul one moment and sweet the next without good cause; the bottom of the affair was involved in obscurity; and, in short, it was

difficult to escape the conclusion that Gilliatt himself had bewitched the water.

On one occasion, when he went to Jersey, it was remarked that he had taken a lodging in the street called the Rue des Alleurs. Now the word *alleurs* signifies spirits from the other world.

In villages it is the custom to gather together all these little hints and indications of a man's career; and when they are gathered together, the total constitutes his reputation among the inhabitants.

It happened that Gilliatt was once caught with blood issuing from his nose. The circumstance appeared grave. The master of a bark who had sailed almost entirely round the world, affirmed that among the Tongusians all sorcerers were subject to bleeding at the nose. In fact, when you see a man in those parts bleeding at the nose, you know at once what is in the wind. Moderate reasoners, however, remarked that the characteristics of sorcerers among the Tongusians may possibly not apply in the same degree to the sorcerers of Guernsey.

In the environs of one of the St. Michels, he had been seen to stop in a close belonging to the Huriaux, skirting the highway from the Videclins. He whistled in the field, and a moment afterwards a crow alighted there; a moment later, a magpie. The fact was attested by a worthy man who has since been appointed to the office of Douzenier of the Douzaine, as those are called who are authorized to make a new survey and register of the fief of the king.

At Hamel, in the Vingtaine of L'Epine, there lived some old women who were positive of having heard one morning a number of swallows distinctly calling "Gilliatt."

Add to all this that he was of a malicious temper.

One day, a poor man was beating an ass. The ass was obstinate. The poor man gave him a few kicks in the belly with his wooden shoe, and the ass fell. Gilliatt ran to raise the unlucky beast, but he was dead. Upon this Gilliatt administered to the poor man a sound thrashing.

Another day, Gilliatt seeing a boy come down from a tree with a brood of little

birds, newly hatched and unfledged, he took the brood away from the boy, and carried his malevolence so far as even to take them back and replace them in the tree.

Some passers-by took up the boy's complaint; but Gilliatt made no reply, except to point to the old birds, who were hovering and crying plaintively over the tree, as they looked for their nest. He had a weakness for birds—another sign by which the people recognize a magician.

Children take a pleasure in robbing the nests of birds along the cliff. They bring home quantities of yellow, blue, and green eggs, with which they make rosaries for mantelpiece ornaments. As the cliffs are peaked, they sometimes slip and are killed. Nothing is prettier than shutters decorated with sea-birds' eggs. Gilliatt's mischievous ingenuity had no end. He would climb, at the peril of his own life, into the steep places of the sea rocks, and hang up bundles of hay, old hats, and all kinds of scarecrows, to deter the birds from building there; and, as a consequence, to prevent the children from visiting those spots.

These are some of the reasons why Gilliatt was disliked throughout the country. Perhaps nothing less could have been expected.

V.

MORE SUSPICIOUS FACTS ABOUT GILLIATT.

PUBLIC OPINION was not yet quite settled with regard to Gilliatt.

In general he was regarded as a *Marcou*: some one went so far as to believe him to be a *Cambion*. A cambion is the child of a woman begotten by a devil.

When a woman bears to her husband seven male children consecutively, the seventh is a *marcou*. But the series must not be broken by the birth of any female child.

The *marcou* has a natural fleur-de-lys imprinted upon some part of his body; for which reason he has the power of curing scrofula, exactly the same as the king of France. Marcous are found in all parts of France, but particularly in the Orlé-

anais. Every village of Gâtinais has its *marcou*. It is sufficient for the cure of the sick, that the *marcou* should breathe upon their wounds, or let them touch his fleur-de-lys. The night of Good Friday is particularly favorable to these ceremonies. Ten years ago there lived, at Ormes in Gâtinais, one of these creatures who was nicknamed the Beau Marcou, and consulted by all the country of Beauce. He was a cooper, named Foulon, who kept a horse and vehicle. To put a stop to his miracles, it was found necessary to call in the assistance of the gendarmes. His fleur-de-lys was on the left breast; other marcous have it in different parts.

There are marcous at Jersey, Auvigny, and at Guernsey. This fact is doubtless in some way connected with the rights possessed by France over Normandy; or why the fleur-de-lys?

There are also, in the Channel Islands, people afflicted with scrofula; which of course necessitates a due supply of these marcous.

Some people, who happened to be present one day when Gilliatt was bathing in the sea, had fancied that they could perceive upon him a fleur-de-lys. Interrogated on that subject he made no reply, but merely burst into laughter. From that time, however, no one ever saw him bathe: he bathed thenceforth only in perilous and solitary places; probably by moonlight: a thing in itself somewhat suspicious.

Those who obstinately regarded him as a cambion, or son of the devil, were evidently in error. They ought to have known that cambions scarcely exist out of Germany. But The Vale and St. Sampson were, fifty years ago, places remarkable for the ignorance of their inhabitants.

To fancy that a resident of the island of Guernsey could be the son of a devil was evidently absurd.

Gilliatt, for the very reason that he caused disquietude among the people, was sought for and consulted. The peasants came in fear, to talk to him of their diseases. That fear itself had in it something of faith in his powers; for in the country, the more the doctor is suspected of magic, the more certain is the cure. Gilliatt had

certain remedies of his own, which he had inherited from the deceased woman. He communicated them to all who had need of them, and would never receive money for them. He cured whitlows with applications of herbs. A liquor in one of his phials allayed fever. The chemist of St. Sampson, or *pharmacien*, as they would call him in France, thought that this was probably a decoction of Jesuits' bark. The more generous among his censors, admitted that Gilliatt was not so bad a demon in his dealings with the sick, so far as regarded his ordinary remedies. But in his character of a *marcou*, he would do nothing. If persons afflicted with scrofula came to him to ask to touch the *fleu-delys* on his skin, he made no other answer than that of shutting the door in their faces. He persistently refused to perform any miracles—a ridiculous position for a sorcerer. No one is bound to be a sorcerer; but when a man is one, he ought not to shirk the duties of his position.

One or two exceptions might be found to this almost universal antipathy. Sieur Landoys, of the Clos-Landés, was clerk and registrar of St. Peter's Port, custodian of the documents, and keeper of the register of births, marriages, and deaths. This Landoys was vain of his descent from Peter Landoys, treasurer of the province of Brittany, who was hanged in 1485. One day, when Sieur Landoys was bathing in the sea, he ventured to swim out too far, and was on the point of drowning: Gilliatt plunged into the water, narrowly escaping drowning himself, and succeeded in saving him. From that day Landoys never spoke an evil word of Gilliatt. To those who expressed surprise at this change, he replied, "Why should I detest a man who never did me any harm, and who has rendered me a service?" The parish clerk and registrar even came at last to feel a sort of friendship for Gilliatt. This public functionary was a man without prejudices. He had no faith in sorcerers. He laughed at people who went in fear of ghostly visitors. For himself, he had a boat in which he amused himself by making fishing excursions in his leisure hours; but he had never seen anything extraordinary, unless

it was on one occasion—a woman clothed in white, who rose about the waters in the light of the moon—and even of this circumstance he was not quite sure. Moutonne Gahy, the old witch of Torteval, had given him a little bag to be worn under the cravat, as a protection against evil spirits: he ridiculed the bag, and knew not what it contained, though, to be sure, he carried it about him, feeling more security with this charm hanging on his neck.

Some courageous persons, emboldened by the example of Landoys, ventured to cite, in Gilliatt's favor, certain extenuating circumstances; a few signs of good qualities, as his sobriety, his abstinence from spirits and tobacco; and sometimes they went so far as to pass this elegant eulogium upon him: "He neither smokes, drinks, chews tobacco, or takes snuff."

Sobriety, however, can only count as a virtue when there are other virtues to support it.

The ban of public opinion lay heavily upon Gilliatt.

In any case, as a *marcou*, Gilliatt had it in his power to render great services. On a certain Good Friday, at midnight, a day and an hour propitious to this kind of cure, all the scrofulous people of the island, either by sudden inspiration, or by concerted action, presented themselves in a crowd at the *Bû de la Rue*, and with piteable sores and imploring gestures, called on Gilliatt to make them clean. But he refused; and herein the people found another proof of his malevolence.

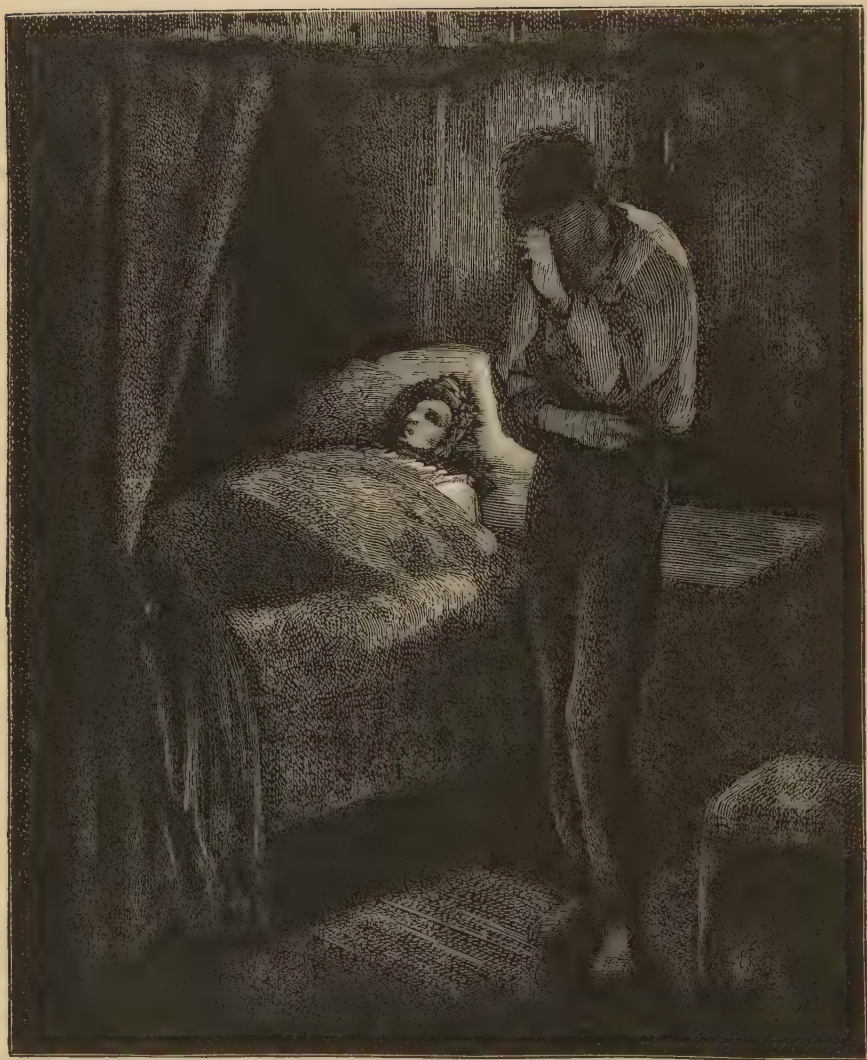
VI.

THE DUTCH SLOOP.

SUCH was the character of Gilliatt.

The young women considered him ugly.

Ugly he was not. He might, perhaps, have been called handsome. There was something in his profile of rude but antique grace. In repose it had some resemblance to that of a sculptured Dacian on the Trajan column. His ears were small, delicate, without lobes, and of an admirable form for hearing. Between his eyes he had that proud vertical line, which indicates in a



GILLIATT AND HIS MOTHER.

Hugo. vol. IV., p. 10.

man boldness and perseverance. The corners of his mouth were depressed, giving a slight expression of bitterness. His forehead had a calm and noble roundness. The clear pupils of his eyes possessed a steadfast look; although troubled a little with that involuntary movement of the eyelids which fishermen contract from the glitter of the waves. His laugh was boyish and pleasing. No ivory could be of a finer white than his teeth; but exposure to the sun had made him swarthy as a Moor. The ocean, the tempest, and the darkness cannot be braved with impunity. At thirty he looked already like a man of forty-five. He wore the sombre mask of the wind and the sea.

The people had nicknamed him "Malicious Gilliatt."

There is an Indian fable to the effect that one day the god Brahma inquired of the Spirit of Power, "Who is stronger than thee?" and the spirit replied "Cunning." A Chinese proverb says, "What could not the lion do, if he was the monkey also?" Gilliatt was neither the lion nor the monkey; but his actions gave some evidence of the truth of the Chinese proverb, and of the Hindoo fable. Although only of ordinary height and strength, he was enabled, so inventive and powerful was his dexterity, to lift burdens that might have taxed a giant, and to accomplish feats which would have done credit to an athlete.

He had in him something of the power of the gymnast. He used, with equal address, his left hand and his right.

He never carried a gun; but was often seen with his net. He spared the birds, but not the fish. His knowledge and skill as a fisherman were, indeed, very considerable. He was an excellent swimmer.

Solitude either develops the mental powers, or renders men dull and vicious. Gilliatt sometimes presented himself under both these aspects. At times, when his features wore that air of strange surprise already mentioned, he might have been taken for a man of mental powers scarcely superior to the savage. At other moments an indescribable air of penetration lighted up his face. Ancient Chaldea possessed

some men of this stamp. At certain times the dulness of the shepherd mind became transparent, and revealed the inspired sage.

After all, he was but a poor man; uneducated, save to the extent of reading and writing. It is probable that the condition of his mind was at that limit which separates the dreamer from the thinker. The thinker wills, the dreamer is a passive instrument. Solitude sinks deeply into pure natures, and modifies them in a certain degree. They become, unconsciously, penetrated with a kind of sacred awe. The shadow in which the mind of Gilliatt constantly dwelt was composed in almost equal degrees of two elements, both obscure, but very different. Within himself all was ignorance and weakness; without, infinity and mysterious power.

By dint of frequent climbing on the rocks, of escalading the rugged cliffs, of going to and fro among the islands in all weathers, of navigating any sort of craft which came to hand, of venturing night and day in difficult channels, he had become, without taking count of his other advantages, and merely in following his fancy and pleasure, a seaman of extraordinary skill.

He was a born pilot. The true pilot is the man who navigates the bed of the ocean even more than its surface. The waves of the sea are an external problem, continually modified by the submarine conditions of the waters in which the vessel is making her way. To see Gilliatt guiding his craft among the reefs and shallows of the Norman Archipelago, one might have fancied that he carried in his head a plan of the bottom of the sea. He was familiar with it all, and feared nothing.

He was better acquainted with the buoys in the channels than the cormorants who make them their resting-places. The almost imperceptible differences which distinguish the four upright buoys of the Cruex, Alligande, the Trémies, and the Sardrette, were perfectly visible and clear to him, even in misty weather. He hesitated neither at the oval, apple-headed buoy of Anfré, nor at the triple iron point

of the Rousse, nor at the white ball of the Corbette, nor at the black ball of Longue Pierre; and there was no fear of his confounding the cross of Goubeau with the sword planted in earth at La Platte, nor the hammer-shaped buoy of the Barbées with the curled-tailed buoy of the Moulinet.

His rare skill in seamanship showed itself in a striking manner one day at Guernsey, on the occasion of one of those sea tournaments which are called regattas. The feat to be performed was to navigate alone a boat with four sails from St. Sampson to the Isle of Herm, at one league distance, and to bring the boat back from Herm to St. Sampson. To manage, without assistance, a boat with four sails, is a feat which every fisherman is equal to, and the difficulty seemed little; but there was a condition which rendered it far from simple. The boat, to begin with, was one of those large and heavy sloops of bygone times which the sailors of the last century knew by the name of "Dutch Belly Boats." This ancient style of flat, pot-bellied craft, carrying on the larboard and starboard sides, in compensation for the want of a keel, two wings, which lowered themselves, sometimes the one, sometimes the other, according to the wind, may occasionally be met with still at sea. In the second place, there was the return from Herm, a journey which was rendered more difficult by a heavy ballasting of stones. The conditions were to go empty, but to return loaded. The sloop was the prize of the contest. It was dedicated beforehand to the winner. This "Dutch Belly Boat" had been employed as a pilot-boat. The pilot who had rigged and worked it for twenty years was the most robust of all the sailors of the channel. When he died no one had been found capable of managing the sloop; and it was, in consequence, determined to make it the prize of the regatta. The sloop, though not decked, had some sea qualities, and was a tempting prize for a skilful sailor. Her mast was somewhat forward, which increased the motive-power of her sails; besides having the advantage of not being in the way of her pilot. It was a strong-built vessel, heavy,

but roomy, and taking the open sea well; in fact, a good, serviceable craft. There was eager anxiety for the prize; the task was a rough one, but the reward of success was worth having. Seven or eight fishermen, among the most vigorous of the island, presented themselves. One by one they essayed, but not one could succeed in reaching Herm. The last one who tried his skill was known for having crossed, in a rowing-boat, the terrible narrow sea between Sark and Brecq-Hou. Sweating with his exertions, he brought back the sloop, and said, "It is impossible." Gilliatt then entered the bark, seized first of all the oar, then the mainsail, and pushed out to sea. Then, without either making fast the boom, which would have been imprudent, or letting it go, which kept the sail under his direction, and leaving the boom to move with the wind without drifting, he held the tiller with his left hand. In three quarters of an hour he was at Herm. Three hours later, although a strong breeze had sprung up and was blowing across the roads, the sloop, guided by Gilliatt, returned to St. Sampson with its load of stones. He had, with an extravagant display of his resources, even added to the cargo the little bronze cannon at Herm, which the people were in the habit of firing off on the 5th of November, by way of rejoicing over the death of Guy Fawkes.

Guy Fawkes, by the way, has been dead one hundred and sixty years; a remarkably long period of rejoicing.

Gilliatt, thus burdened and encumbered, although he had the Guy Fawkes'-day cannon in the boat and the south wind in his sails, steered, or rather brought back, the heavy craft to St. Sampson.

Seeing which, Mess Lethierry exclaimed, "There's a bold sailor for you!"

And he held out his hand to Gilliatt.

We shall have occasion to speak again of Mess Lethierry.

The sloop was awarded to Gilliatt.

This adventure detracted nothing from his evil reputation.

Several persons declared that the feat was not at all astonishing, for that Gilliatt had concealed in the boat a branch

of wild medlar. But this could not be proved.

From that day forward, Gilliatt navigated no boat except the old sloop. In this heavy craft he went on his fishing avocation. He kept it at anchor in the excellent little shelter which he had all to himself, under the very wall of his house of the *Bû de la Rue*. At nightfall, he cast his nets over his shoulder, traversed his little garden, climbed over the parapet of dry stones, stepped lightly from rock to rock, and jumping into the sloop, pushed out to sea.

He brought home heavy takes of fish; but people said that his medlar branch was always hanging up in the boat. No one had ever seen this branch, but every one believed in its existence.

When he had more fish than he wanted, he did not sell it, but gave it away.

The poor people took his gift, but were little grateful, for they knew the secret of his medlar branch. Such devices cannot be permitted. It is unlawful to trick the sea out of its treasures.

He was a fisherman; but he was something more. He had, by instinct, or for amusement, acquired a knowledge of three or four trades. He was a carpenter, worker in iron, wheelwright, boat-caulker, and, to some extent, an engineer. No one could mend a broken wheel better than he could. He manufactured, in a fashion of his own, all the things which fishermen use. In a corner of the *Bû de la Rue* he had a small forge and an anvil; and the sloop having but one anchor, he had succeeded, without help, in making another. The anchor was excellent. The ring had the necessary strength; and Gilliatt, though entirely uninstructed in this branch of the smith's art, had found the exact dimensions of the stock for preventing the over-balancing of the fluke ends.

He had patiently replaced all the nails in the planks by rivets; which rendered rust in the holes impossible.

In this way he had much improved the sea-going qualities of the sloop. He employed it sometimes when he took a fancy to spend a month or two in some solitary islet, like *Chousey* or the *Casquets*. Peo-

ple said "Ay! ay! Gilliatt is away:" but this was a circumstance which nobody regretted.

VII.

A FIT TENANT FOR A HAUNTED HOUSE.

GILLIATT was a man of dreams, hence his daring, hence also his timidity. He had ideas on many things which were peculiarly his own.

There was in his character perhaps something of the visionary and the transcendentalist. Hallucinations may haunt the poor peasant like Martin, no less than the king like Henry IV. There are times when the unknown reveals itself in a mysterious way to the spirit of man. A sudden rent in the veil of darkness will make manifest things hitherto unseen, and then close again upon the mysteries within. Such visions have occasionally the power to effect a transfiguration in those whom they visit. They convert a poor camel-driver into a Mahomet; a peasant girl tending her goats into a Joan of Arc. Solitude generates a certain amount of sublime exaltation. It is like the smoke arising from the burning bush. A mysterious lucidity of mind results, which converts the student into a seer, and the poet into a prophet: herein we find a key to the mysteries of Horeb, Kedron, Ombos; to the intoxication of Castilian laurels, the revelations of the month Busion. Hence, too, we have *Peleia* at Dodona, *Phemonoe* at Delphos, *Trophonius* in Lebadea, *Ezekiel* on the Chebar, and *Jerome* in the Thetais.

More frequently this visionary state overwhelms and stupefies its victim: there is such a thing as a divine besottedness. The Hindoo fakir bears about with him the burden of his vision, as the Cretin his *goître*. Luther holding converse with devils in his garret at Wittenburg; Pascal shutting out the view of the infernal regions with the screen of his cabinet; the African *Obi* conversing with the white-faced god *Bossum*; are each and all the same phenomenon, diversely interpreted by the minds in which they manifest themselves, according to their capacity and power. Luther and Pascal were grand,

and are grand still; the Obi is simply a poor half-witted creature.

Gilliatt was neither so exalted nor so low. He was a dreamer: nothing more.

Nature presented itself to him under a somewhat strange aspect.

Just as he had often found in the perfectly limpid water of the sea strange creatures of considerable size and of various shapes, of the Medusa genus, which out of the water bore a resemblance to soft crystal, and which, cast again into the sea, became lost to sight in that medium by reason of their identity in transparency and color, so he imagined that other transparencies, similar to these almost invisible denizens of the ocean, might probably inhabit the air around us. The birds are scarcely inhabitants of the air, but rather amphibious creatures passing much of their lives upon the earth. Gilliatt could not believe the air a mere desert. He used to say, "Since the water is filled with life, why not the atmosphere?" Creatures colorless and transparent like the air would escape from our observation. What proof have we that there are no such creatures? Analogy indicates that the liquid fields of air must have their swimming habitants, even as the waters of the deep. These aerial fish would, of course, be diaphanous; a provision of their wise Creator for our sakes as well as their own. Allowing the light to pass through their forms, casting no shadow, having no defined outline, they would necessarily remain unknown to us, and beyond the grasp of human sense. Gilliatt indulged the wild fancy that if it were possible to exhaust the earth of its atmosphere, or if we could fish the air as we fish the depths of the sea, we should discover the existence of a multitude of strange animals. And then, he would add in his reverie, many things would be made clear.

Reverie, which is thought in its nebulous state, borders closely upon the land of sleep, by which it is bounded as by a natural frontier. The discovery of a new world, in the form of an atmosphere filled with transparent creatures, would be the beginning of a knowledge of the vast unknown. But beyond opens up the illimitable domain

of the possible, teeming with yet other beings, and characterized by other phenomena. All this would be nothing supernatural, but merely the occult continuation of the infinite variety of creation. In the midst of that laborious idleness, which was the chief feature in his existence, Gilliatt was singularly observant. He even carried his observations into the domain of sleep. Sleep has a close relation with the possible, which we call also the *invraisemblable*. The world of sleep has an existence of its own. Night-time, regarded as a separate sphere of creation, is a universe in itself. The material nature of man, upon which philosophers tell us that a column of air forty-five miles in height continually presses, is wearied out at night, sinks into lassitude, lies down, and finds repose. The eyes of the flesh are closed; but in that drooping head, less inactive than is supposed, other eyes are opened. The unknown reveals itself. The shadowy existences of the invisible world become more akin to man; whether it be that there is a real communication, or whether things far off in the unfathomable abyss are mysteriously brought nearer, it seems as if the impalpable creatures inhabiting space come then to contemplate our natures, curious to comprehend the denizens of the earth. Some phantom creation ascends or descends to walk beside us in the dim twilight: some existence altogether different from our own, composed partly of human consciousness, partly of something else, quits his fellows and returns again, after presenting himself for a moment to our inward sight; and the sleeper, not wholly slumbering, nor yet entirely conscious, beholds around him strange manifestations of life—pale spectres, terrible or smiling, dismal phantoms, uncouth masks, unknown faces, hydra-headed monsters, undefined shapes, reflections of moonlight where there is no moon, vague fragments of monstrous forms. All these things which come and go in the troubled atmosphere of sleep, and to which men give the name of dreams, are, in truth, only realities invisible to those who walk about the daylight world.

So, at least, thought Gilliatt.

VIII.

THE GILD-HOLM-'UR SEAT.

THE curious visitor, in these days, would seek in vain in the little bay of Houmet for the house in which Gilliatt lived, or for his garden, or the creek in which he sheltered the Dutch sloop. The Bû de la Rue no longer exists. Even the little peninsula on which his house stood has vanished, levelled by the pickaxe of the quarryman, and carried away cart-load by cart-load, by dealers in rock and granite. It must be sought now in the churches, the palaces, and the quays of a great city. All that ridge of rocks has been long ago conveyed to London.

These long lines of broken cliffs in the sea, with their frequent gaps and crevices, are like miniature chains of mountains. They strike the eye with the impression which a giant may be supposed to have in contemplating the Cordilleras. In the language of the country they are called "Banques." These banques vary considerably in form. Some resemble a long spine, of which each rock forms one of the vertebræ; others are like the back-bone of a fish; while some bear an odd resemblance to a crocodile in the act of drinking.

At the extremity of the ridge on which the Bû de la Rue was situate, was a large rock, which the fishing people of Houmet called the "Beast's Horn." This rock, a sort of pyramid, resembled, though less in height, the "Pinnacle" of Jersey. At high water the sea divided it from the ridge, and the Horn stood alone; at low water it was approached by an isthmus of rocks. The remarkable feature of this "Beast's Horn" was a sort of natural seat on the side next the sea, hollowed out by the water, and polished by the rains. The seat, however, was a treacherous one. The stranger was insensibly attracted to it by "the beauty of the prospect," as the Guernsey folks said. Something detained him there in spite of himself, for there is a charm in a wide view. The seat seemed to offer itself for his convenience; it formed a sort of niche in the peaked *façade* of the rock. To climb up to it was easy, for the sea, which had fashioned it out of its rocky

base, had also cast beneath it, at convenient distances, a kind of natural stairs composed of flat stones. The perilous abyss is full of these snares; beware, therefore, of its proffered aids. The spot was tempting: the stranger mounted and sat down. There he found himself at his ease; for his seat he had the granite rounded and hollowed out by the foam; for supports, two rocky elbows which seemed made expressly for him; against his back, the high vertical wall of rock which he looked up to and admired, without thinking of the impossibility of scaling it. Nothing could be more simple than to fall into reverie in that convenient resting-place. All around spread the wide sea; far off the ships were seen passing to and fro. It was possible to follow a sail with the eye, till it sank in the horizon beyond the Casquets. The stranger was entranced: he looked around, enjoying the beauty of the scene, and the light touch of wind and wave. There is a sort of bat found at Cayenne, which has the power of fanning people to sleep in the shade with a gentle beating of its dusky wings. Like this strange creature the wind wanders about, alternately ravaging or lulling into security. So the stranger would continue contemplating the sea, listening for a movement in the air, and yielding himself up to dreamy indolence. When the eyes are satiated with light and beauty, it is a luxury to close them for awhile. Suddenly the loiterer would arouse; but it was too late. The sea had crept up step by step; the waters surrounded the rock; the stranger had been lured on to his death.

A terrible rock was this in a rising sea.

The tide gathers at first insensibly, then with violence; when it touches the rocks a sudden wrath seems to possess it, and it foams. Swimming is difficult in the breakers: excellent swimmers have been lost at the Horn of the Bû de la Rue.

In certain places, and at certain periods, the aspect of the sea is dangerous—fatal; as at times is the glance of a woman.

Very old inhabitants of Guernsey used to call this niche, fashioned in the rock by the waves, "Gild-Holm-'Ur" seat, or Kidormur; a Celtic word, say some au-

thorities, which those who understand Celtic cannot interpret, and which all who understand French can—" *Qui-dort-meurt*."* such is the country folks' translation.

The reader may choose between the translation, *Qui-dort-meurt*, and that given in 1819, I believe in *The Armorican*, by M. Athenas. According to this learned Celtic scholar, Gild-Holm-'Ur signifies "The resting-place of birds."

There is, at Aurigny, another seat of this kind, called the Monk's Chair, so well sculptured by the waves, and with steps of rock so conveniently placed, that it might be said that the sea politely sets a footstool for those who rest there.

In the open sea, at high water, the Gild-Holm-'Ur was no longer visible; the water covered it entirely.

The Gild-Holm-'Ur was a neighbor of the Bû de la Rue. Gilliatt knew it well, and often seated himself there. Was it his meditating place? No. We have already said he did not meditate, but dream. The sea, however, never entrapped him there.

BOOK II.

MESS LETHIERRY.

I.

A TROUBLED LIFE, BUT A QUIET CONSCIENCE.

MESS LETHIERRY, a conspicuous man in St. Sampson, was a redoubtable sailor. He had voyaged a great deal. He had been a cabin-boy, seaman, topmast-man, second mate, mate, pilot, and captain. He was at this period a ship owner. There was not a man to compare with him for general knowledge of the sea. He was brave in putting off to ships in distress. In foul weather he would take his way along the beach, scanning the horizon. "What have we yonder?" he would say; "some craft in trouble?" Whether it

were an interloping Weymouth fisherman, a cutter from Aurigny, a bisquine from Courseulle, the yacht of some nobleman, an English craft or a French one—poor or rich, mattered little. He jumped into a boat, called together two or three strong fellows, or did without them, as the case might be, pushed out to sea, rose and sank, and rose again on rolling waves, plunged into the storm, and encountered the danger face to face. Then afar off, amid the rain and lightning, and drenched with water, he was sometimes seen upright in his boat like a lion with a foaming mane. Often he would pass whole days in danger amidst the waves, the hail, and the wind, making his way to the sides of foundering vessels during the tempest, and rescuing men and merchandise. At night, after feats like these, he would return home, and pass his time in knitting stockings.

For fifty years he led this kind of life—from ten years of age to sixty—so long did he feel himself still young. At sixty, he began to discover that he could no longer lift with one hand the great anvil at the forge at Varclin. This anvil weighed three hundred-weight. At length rheumatic pains compelled him to be a prisoner; he was forced to give up his old struggle with the sea, to pass from the heroic into the patriarchal stage, to sink into the condition of a harmless, worthy old fellow.

Happily his rheumatism attacks happened at the period when he had secured a comfortable competency. These two consequences of labor are natural companions. At the moment when men become rich, how often comes paralysis—the sorrowful crowning of a laborious life!

Old and weary men say among themselves, "let us rest and enjoy life."

The population of islands like Guernsey is composed of men who have passed their lives in going about their little fields or in sailing round the world. These are the two classes of the laboring people; the laborers on the land, and the toilers of the sea. Mess Lethierry was of the latter class; he had had a life of hard work. He had been upon the continent; was for some time a ship carpenter at Rochefort, and afterwards at Cette. We have just spoken

* He who sleeps must die.

of sailing round the world; he had made the circuit of all France, getting work as a journeyman carpenter; and had been employed at the great salt works of Franche-Comte. Though a humble man, he had led a life of adventure. In France he had learned to read, to think, to have a will of his own. He had had a hand in many things, and in all he had done had kept a character for probity. At bottom, however, he was simply a sailor. The water was his element; he used to say that he lived with the fish when really at home. In short, his whole existence, except two or three years, had been devoted to the ocean. Flung into the water, as he said, he had navigated the great oceans both of the Atlantic and the Pacific, but he preferred the Channel. He used to exclaim enthusiastically, "that is the sea for a rough time of it!" He was born at sea, and at sea would have preferred to end his days. After sailing several times round the world, and seeing most countries, he had returned to Guernsey, and never permanently left the island again. Henceforth his great voyages were to Granville and St. Malo.

Mess Lethierry was a Guernsey man—that peculiar amalgamation of Frenchman and Norman, or rather English. He had within himself this quadruple extraction, merged and almost lost in that far wider country, the ocean. Throughout his life and wheresoever he went, he had preserved the habits of a Norman fisherman.

All this, however, did not prevent his looking now and then into some old book; of taking pleasure in reading, in knowing the names of philosophers and poets, and in talking a little now and then in all languages.

II.

A CERTAIN PREDILECTION.

GILLIATT had in his nature something of the uncivilized man. Mess Lethierry had the same.

Lethierry's uncultivated nature, however, was not without certain refinements.

He was fastidious upon the subject of women's hands. In his early years, while still a lad, passing from the stage of cabin-

boy to that of sailor, he had heard the Admiral de Suffren say, "There goes a pretty girl; but what horrible great red hands." An observation from an admiral on any subject is a command, a law, an authority far above that of an oracle. The exclamation of Admiral de Suffren had rendered Lethierry fastidious and exacting in the matter of small and white hands. His own hand, a large club fist of the color of mahogany, was like a mallet or a pair of pincers for a friendly grasp, and, tightly closed, would almost break a paving-stone.

He had never married; he had either no inclination for matrimony, or had never found a suitable match. That, perhaps, was due to his being a stickler for hands like those of a duchess. Such hands are, indeed, somewhat rare among the fishermen's daughters at Portbail.

It was whispered, however, that at Rochefort, on the Charente, he had, once upon a time, made the acquaintance of a certain grisette, realizing his ideal. She was a pretty girl with graceful hands; but she was a vixen, and had also a habit of scratching. Woe betide any one who attacked her! yet her nails, though capable at a pinch of being turned into claws, were of a whiteness which left nothing to be desired. It was these peculiarly bewitching nails which had first enchanted and then disturbed the peace of Lethierry, who, fearing that he might one day become no longer master of his mistress, had decided not to conduct that young lady to the nuptial altar.

Another time he met at Aurigny a country girl who pleased him. He thought of marriage, when one of the inhabitants of the place said to him, "I congratulate you; you will have for your wife a good fuel maker." Lethierry asked the meaning of this. It appeared that the country people at Aurigny have a certain custom of collecting manure from their cow-houses, which they throw against a wall, where it is left to dry and fall to the ground. Cakes of dried manure of this kind are used for fuel, and are called *coïpiaux*. A country girl of Aurigny has no chance of getting a husband if she is not a good fuel maker; but the young

lady's especial talent only inspired disgust in Lethierry.

Besides, he had in his love matters a kind of rough country folks' philosophy, a sailorlike sort of habit of mind. Always smitten but never enslaved, he boasted of having been in his youth easily conquered by a petticoat, or rather a *cotillon*; for what is nowadays called a crinoline, was in his time called a *cotillon*; a term which, in his use of it, signifies both something more and something less than a wife.

These rude seafaring men of the Norman Archipelago, have a certain amount of shrewdness. Almost all can read and write. On Sundays, little cabin-boys may be seen in those parts, seated upon a coil of ropes, reading, with book in hand. From all time these Norman sailors have had a peculiar satirical vein, and have been famous for clever sayings. It was one of these men, the bold pilot Quéripel, who said to Montgomery, when he sought refuge in Jersey after the unfortunate accident in killing Henry II. at a tournament, with a blow of his lance, "*Tête folle acassé tête vide.*" Another one, Touzeau, a sea-captain at Saint Brelade, was the author of that philosophical pun, erroneously attributed to Camus, "*Après la mort, les papes deviennent papillons, et les sires deviennent cirons.*"

The mariners of the Channel are the true ancient Gauls. The islands, which in these days become rapidly more and more English—preserved for many ages their old French character. The peasant in Sark speaks the language of Louis XIV. Forty years ago, the old classical nautical language was to be found in the mouths of the sailors of Jersey and Aurigny. When amongst them, it was possible to imagine one's self carried back to the sea life of the seventeenth century. From that speaking trumpet which terrified Admiral Hidde, a philologist might have learnt the ancient technicalities of manœuvring and giving orders at sea, in the very words which were roared out to his sailors by Jean Bart. The old French maritime vocabulary is now almost entirely changed, but was still in use in Jersey in 1820.

It was with this uncouth sea dialect in

his mouth that Duquesne beat De Ruyter, that Duguay Trouin defeated Wasnaer, and that Tourville, in 1681, poured a broadside into the first galley which bombarded Algiers. It is now a dead language. The idiom of the sea is altogether different. Duperré would not be able to understand Suffren.

The language of French naval signals is not less transformed; there is a long distance between the four pennants, red, white, yellow, and blue, of Labourdonnaye, and the eighteen flags of these days, which, hoisted two and two, three and three, or four and four, furnish, for distant communication, sixty-six thousand combinations, are never deficient, and, so to speak, foresee the unforeseen.

III.

MESS LETHIERRY'S VULNERABLE PART.

MESS LETHIERRY'S heart and hand were always ready—a large heart and a large hand. His failing was that admirable one, self-confidence. He had a certain fashion of his own of undertaking to do a thing. It was a solemn fashion. He said, "I give my word of honor to do it, with God's help." That said, he went through with his duty. He put his faith in God—nothing more. The little that he went to church was merely formal. At sea, he was superstitious.

Nevertheless, the storm had never yet arisen which could daunt him. One reason of this was his impatience of opposition. He could tolerate it neither from the ocean nor anything else. He meant to have his way; so much the worse for the sea if it thwarted him. It might try, if it would, but Mess Lethierry would not give in. A refractory wave could no more stop him than an angry neighbor. What he had said was said; what he planned out was done. He bent neither before an objection nor before the tempest. The word "no" had no existence for him, whether it was in the mouth of a man or in the angry muttering of a thunder-cloud. In the teeth of all he went on in his way. He would take no refusals. Hence his obstinacy in life, and his intrepidity on the ocean.

He seasoned his simple meal of fish soup for himself, knowing the quantities of pepper, salt, and herbs which it required, and was as well pleased with the cooking as with the meal. To complete the sketch of Lethierry's peculiarities, the reader must conjure a being to whom the putting on of a surtout would amount to a transfiguration; whom a landsman's great-coat would convert into a strange animal; one who, standing with his locks blown about by the wind, might have represented old Jean Bart, but who, in the landsman's round hat, would have looked an idiot; awkward in cities, wild and redoubtable at sea; a man with broad shoulders, fit for a porter; one who indulged in no oaths, was rarely in anger, whose voice had a soft accent, which became like thunder in a speaking-trumpet; a peasant who had read something of the philosophy of Diderot and D'Alembert; a Guernsey man who had seen the great Revolution; a learned ignoramus, free from bigotry, but indulging in visions, with more faith in the White Lady than in the Holy Virgin; possessing the strength of Polyphemus, the perseverance of Columbus, with a little of the bull in his nature, and a little of the child. Add to these physical and mental peculiarities a somewhat flat nose, large cheeks, a set of teeth still perfect, a face filled with wrinkles, and which seemed to have been buffeted by the waves and subjected to the beating of the winds of forty years, a brow in which the storm and tempest were plainly written—an incarnation of a rock in the open sea. Add to this, too, a good-tempered smile always ready to light up his weather-beaten countenance, and you have before you Mess Lethierry.

Mess Lethierry had two special objects of affection only. Their names were Durande and Déruchette.

BOOK III

DURANDE AND DÉRUCHETTE.

I.

PRATTLE AND SMOKE.

THE human body might well be regarded as a mere simulacrum; but it envelopes

our reality, it darkens our light, and broadens the shadow in which we live. The soul is the reality of our existence. Strictly speaking, the human visage is a mask. The true man is that which exists under what is called man. If that being, which thus exists sheltered and secreted behind that illusion which we call the flesh, could be approached, more than one strange revelation would be made. The vulgar error is to mistake the outward husk for the living spirit. Yonder maiden, for example, if we could see her as she really is, might she not figure as some bird of the air?

A bird transmuted into a young maiden, what could be more exquisite? Picture it in your own home, and call it Déruchette. Delicious creature! One might be almost tempted to say "Good morning, Mademoiselle Goldfinch." The wings are invisible, but the chirping may still be heard. Sometimes, too, she pipes a clear, loud song. In her childlike prattle, the creature is, perhaps, inferior; but in her song, how superior to humanity! When womanhood dawns, this angel flies away; but sometimes returns, bringing back a little one to a mother. Meanwhile, she who is one day to be a mother is for a long while a child; the girl becomes a maiden, fresh and joyous as the lark. Noting her movements, we feel as if it was good of her not to fly away. The dear familiar companion moves at her own sweet will about the house; flits from branch to branch, or rather from room to room; goes to and fro; approaches and retires; plumes her wings, or rather combs her hair, and makes all kinds of gentle noises—murmurings of unspeakable delight to certain ears. She asks a question, and is answered; is asked something in return, and chirps a reply. It is delightful to chat with her when tired of serious talk; for this creature carries with her something of her skyey element. She is, as it were, a thread of gold interwoven with your sombre thoughts; you feel almost grateful to her for her kindness in not making herself invisible, when it would be so easy for her to be even impalpable; for the beautiful is a necessary of life. There is, in this world, no function

more important than that of being charming. The forest-glade would be incomplete without the humming-bird. To shed joy around, to radiate happiness, to cast light upon dark days, to be the golden thread of our destiny, and the very spirit of grace and harmony, is not this to render a service? Does not beauty confer a benefit upon us, even by the simple fact of being beautiful? Here and there we meet with one who possesses that fairy-like power of enchanting all about her; sometimes she is ignorant herself of this magical influence, which is, however, for that reason, only the more perfect. Her presence lights up the home; her approach is like a cheerful warmth; she passes by, and we are content; she stays awhile, and we are happy. To behold her is to live: she is the Aurora with a human face. She has no need to do more than simply to be: she makes an Eden of the house; Paradise breathes from her; and she communicates this delight to all, without taking any greater trouble than that of existing beside them. Is it not a thing divine to have a smile which, none know how, has the power to lighten the weight of that enormous chain which all the living, in common, drag behind them? Déruchette possessed this smile: we may even say that this smile was Déruchette herself. There is one thing which has more resemblance to ourselves than even our face, and that is our expression: but there is yet another thing which more resembles us than this, and that is our smile. Déruchette smiling was simply Déruchette.

There is something peculiarly attractive in the Jersey and Guernsey race. The women, particularly the young, are remarkable for a pure and exquisite beauty. Their complexion is a combination of the Saxon fairness, with the proverbial ruddiness of the Norman people—rosy cheeks and blue eyes; but the eyes want brilliancy. The English training dulls them. Their liquid glances will be irresistible whenever the secret is found of giving them that depth which is the glory of the Parisienne. Happily Englishwomen are not yet quite transformed into the Parisian type. Déruchette was not a Parisian; yet she was

certainly not a Guernesiaise. Lethierry had brought her up to be neat and delicate and pretty; and so she was.

Déruchette had, at times, an air of bewitching languor, and a certain mischief in the eye, which were altogether involuntary. She scarcely knew, perhaps, the meaning of the word love, and yet not unwillingly ensnared those about her in the toils. But all this in her was innocent. She never thought of marrying.

Déruchette had the prettiest little hands in the world, and little feet to match them. Sweetness and goodness reigned throughout her person; her family and fortune were her uncle Mess Lethierry; her occupation was only to live her daily life; her accomplishments were the knowledge of a few songs; her intellectual gifts were summed up in her simple innocence; she had the graceful repose of the West Indian woman, mingled at times with giddiness and vivacity, with the teasing playfulness of a child, yet with a dash of melancholy. Her dress was somewhat rustic, and like that peculiar to her country—elegant, though not in accordance with the fashions of great cities; for she wore flowers in her bonnet all the year round. Add to all this an open brow, a neck supple and graceful, chestnut hair, a fair skin slightly freckled with exposure to the sun, a mouth somewhat large, but well-defined, and visited from time to time by a dangerous smile. This was Déruchette.

Sometimes, in the evening, a little after sunset, at the moment when the dusk of the sky mingles with the dusk of the sea, and twilight invests the waves with a mysterious awe, the people beheld, entering the harbor of St. Sampson, upon the dark rolling waters, a strange, undefined thing, a monstrous form which puffed and blew; a horrid machine which roared like a wild beast, and smoked like a volcano; a species of Hydra foaming among the breakers, and leaving behind it a dense cloud, as it rushed on towards the town with a frightful beating of its fins, and a throat belching forth flame. This was Durande.

II.

THE OLD STORY OF UTOPIA.

A STEAMBOAT was a prodigious novelty in the waters of the Channel in 182-. The whole coast of Normandy was long strangely excited by it. Now-a-days, ten or a dozen steam vessels, crossing and re-crossing within the bounds of the horizon, scarcely attract a glance from loiterers on the shore. At the most, some persons, whose interest or business it is to note such things, will observe the indications in their smoke of whether they burn Welsh or Newcastle coal. They pass, and that is all. "Welcome," if coming home; "a pleasant passage," if outward bound.

Folks were less calm on the subject of these wonderful inventions in the first quarter of the present century; and the new and strange machines, and their long lines of smoke regarded with no good-will by the Channel Islanders. In that Puritanical Archipelago, where the Queen of England has been censured for violating the Scriptures* by using chloroform during her accouchements, the first steam-vessel which made its appearance received the name of the "Devil Boat." In the eyes of these worthy fishermen, once Catholics, now Calvinists, but always bigots, it seemed to be a portion of the infernal regions which had been somehow set afloat. A local preacher selected for his discourse the question of "Whether man has the right to make fire and water work together when God had divided them."† This beast, composed of iron and fire, did it not resemble Leviathan? Was it not an attempt to bring chaos again into the universe? This is not the only occasion on which the progress of civilization has been stigmatized as a return to chaos.

"A mad notion—a gross delusion—an absurdity!" Such was the verdict of the Academy of Sciences when consulted by Napoleon on the subject of steamboats, early in the present century. The poor fishermen of St. Sampson may be excused for not being, in scientific matters, any

wiser than the mathematicians of Paris; and in religious matters, a little island like Guernsey is not bound to be more enlightened than a great continent like America. In the year 1807, when the first steamboat of Fulton, commanded by Livingston, furnished with one of Watt's engines, sent from England, and manœuvred, besides her ordinary crew, by two Frenchmen only, André Michaux and another, made her first voyage from New York to Albany, it happened that she set sail on the 17th of August. The Methodists took up this important fact, and in numberless chapels, preachers were heard calling down a malediction on the machine, and declaring that this number 17 was no other than the total of the ten horns and seven heads of the beast of the Apocalypse. In America, they invoked against the steamboats the beast from the book of Revelation; in Europe, the reptile of the book of Genesis. This was the simple difference.

The savants had rejected steamboats as impossible; the priests had anathematized them as impious. Science had condemned, and religion consigned them to perdition. Fulton was a new incarnation of Lucifer. The simple people on the coasts and in the villages were confirmed in their prejudice by the uneasiness which they felt at the outlandish sight. The religious view of steamboats may be summed up as follows: Water and fire were divorced at the creation. This divorce was enjoined by God himself. Man has no right to join what his Maker has put asunder; to reunite what he has disunited. The peasants' view was simply, "I don't like the look of this thing."

No one but Mess Lethierry, perhaps, could have been found at that early period daring enough to dream of such an enterprise as the establishment of a steam-vessel between Guernsey and St. Malo. He, alone, as an independent thinker, was capable of conceiving such an idea, or, as a hardy mariner, of carrying it out. The French part of his nature, probably, conceived the idea; the English part supplied the energy to put it in execution.

How and when this was, we are about to inform the reader.

* Genesis, chap. iii. v. 16.

† Genesis, chap. i. v. 4.

III.

RANTAINE.

ABOUT forty years before the period of the commencement of our narrative, there stood in the suburbs of Paris, near the city wall, between the Fosse-aux-Loups and the Tombe-Issoire, a house of doubtful reputation. It was a lonely, ruinous building, evidently a place for dark deeds on an occasion. Here lived, with his wife and child, a species of town bandit; a man who had been clerk to an attorney practicing at the Châtelet—he figured somewhat later at the Assize Court; the name of this family was Rantaine. On a mahogany chest of drawers in the old house were two china cups, ornamented with flowers, on one of which appeared, in gilt letters, the words, “A souvenir of friendship;” on the other, “A token of esteem.” The child lived in an atmosphere of vice in this miserable home. The father and mother having belonged to the lower middle class, the boy had learnt to read, and they brought it up in a fashion. The mother, pale and almost in rags, gave “instruction” as she called it, mechanically, to the little one, heard it spell a few words to her, and interrupted the lesson to accompany her husband on some criminal expedition, or to earn the wages of prostitution. Meanwhile, the book remained open on the table as she had left it, and the boy sat beside it, meditating in his way.

The father and mother, detected one day in one of their criminal enterprises, suddenly vanished into that obscurity in which the penal laws envelop convicted malefactors. The child, too, disappeared.

Lethierry, in his wanderings about the world, stumbled, one day, on an adventurer like himself; helped him out of some scrape; rendered him a kindly service, and was apparently repaid with gratitude. He took a fancy to the stranger, picked him up, and brought him to Guernsey, where, finding him intelligent in learning the duties of a sailor aboard a coasting vessel, he made him a companion. This stranger was the little Rantaine, now grown up to manhood.

Rantaine, like Lethierry, had a bull neck,

a large and powerful breadth of shoulders for carrying burdens, and loins like those of the Farnese Hercules. Lethierry and he had a remarkable similarity of appearance: Rantaine was the taller. People who saw their forms behind as they were walking side by side along the port, exclaimed, “There are two brothers.” On looking them in the face the effect was different: all that was open in the countenance of Lethierry was reserved and cautious in that of Rantaine. Rantaine was an expert swordsman, played on the harmonica, could snuff a candle at twenty paces with a pistol-ball, could strike a tremendous blow with the fist, recite verses from Voltaire’s “Henriade,” and interpret dreams; he knew by heart “*Les Tombeaux de Saint Denis*,” by Treneuil. He talked sometimes of having had relations with the Sultan of Calicut, “whom the Portuguese call the Zamorin.” If any one had seen the little memorandum-book which he carried about with him, he would have found notes and jottings of this kind:—“At Lyons in a fissure of the wall of one of the cells in the prison of St. Joseph, a file.” He spoke always with a grave deliberation; he called himself the son of a Chevalier de Saint Louis. His linen was of a miscellaneous kind, and marked with different initials. Nobody was ever more tender than he was on the point of honor; he fought and killed his man. The mother of a pretty actress could not have an eye more watchful for an insult.

He might have stood for the personification of subtlety under an outer garb of enormous strength.

It was the power of his fist, applied one day at a fair, upon a *cabeza de moro*, which had originally taken the fancy of Lethierry. No one in Guernsey knew anything of his adventures. They were of a checkered kind. If the great theatre of destiny had a special wardrobe, Rantaine ought to have taken the dress of harlequin. He had lived, and had seen the world. He had run through the gamut of possible trades and qualities; had been a cook at Madagascar, trainer of birds at Honolulu, a religious journalist at the Galapagos Islands, a poet at Oomrawuttee, a

freeman at Haiti. In this latter character he had delivered at Grand Goave a funeral oration, of which the local journals have preserved this fragment:—"Farewell, then, noble spirit. In the azure vault of the heavens, where thou wingest now thy flight, thou wilt, no doubt, rejoin the good Abbé Leander Crameau, of Little Goave. Tell him that, thanks to ten years of glorious efforts, thou hast completed the church of the *Ansa-à-Veau*. Adieu! transcendent genius, model mason!" His freemason's mask did not prevent him, as we see, wearing a little of the Roman Catholic. The former won to his side the men of progress, and the latter the men of order. He declared himself a white of pure caste, and hated the negroes; though, for all that, he would certainly have been an admirer of the Emperor Soulouque. In 1815, at Bordeaux, the glow of his royalist enthusiasm broke forth in the shape of a huge white feather in his cap. His life had been a series of eclipses—of appearances, disappearances, and reappearances. He was a sort of revolving light upon the coasts of scampdom. He knew a little Turkish: instead of "guillotined" would say "*néboïssé*." He had been a slave in Tripoli, in the house of a Thaleb, and had learnt Turkish by dint of blows with a stick. His employment had been to stand at evenings at the doors of the mosque, there to read aloud to the faithful the Koran inscribed upon slips of wood, or pieces of camel leather. It is not improbable that he was a renegade.

He was capable of everything, and something worse.

He had a trick of laughing loud and knitting his brows at the same time. He used to say, "In politics, I esteem only men inaccessible to influences;" or, "I am for decency and good morals;" or, "The pyramid must be replaced upon its base." His manner was rather cheerful and cordial than otherwise. The expression of his mouth contradicted the sense of his words. His nostrils had an odd way of distending themselves. In the corners of his eyes he had a little network of wrinkles, in which all sorts of dark thoughts seemed to meet together. It was here

alone that the secret of his physiognomy could be thoroughly studied. His flat foot was a vulture's claw. His skull was low at the top and large about the temples. His ill-shapen ear, bristled with hair, seemed to say, "Beware of speaking to the animal in this cave."

One fine day, in Guernsey, Rantaine was suddenly missing.

Lethierry's partner had absconded, leaving the treasury of their partnership empty.

In this treasury there was some money of Rantaine's, no doubt, but there were also fifty thousand francs belonging to Lethierry.

By forty years of industry and probity as a coaster and ship carpenter, Lethierry had saved one hundred thousand francs. Rantaine robbed him of half the sum.

Half ruined, Lethierry did not lose heart, but began at once to think how to repair his misfortune. A stout heart may be ruined in fortune, but not in spirit. It was just about that time that people began to talk of the new kind of boat to be moved by steam-engines. Lethierry conceived the idea of trying Fulton's invention, so much disputed about; and by one of these fire-boats to connect the Channel Islands with the French coast. He staked his all upon this idea; he devoted to it the wreck of his savings. Accordingly, six months after Rantaine's flight, the astonished people of St. Sampson beheld, issuing from the port, a vessel discharging huge volumes of smoke, and looking like a ship a-fire at sea. This was the first steam-vessel to navigate the Channel.

This vessel, to which the people in their dislike and contempt for novelty immediately gave the nickname of "Lethierry's Galley," was announced as intended to maintain a constant communication between Guernsey and St. Malo.

IV.

CONTINUATION OF THE STORY OF UTOPIA.

It may be well imagined that the new enterprise did not prosper much at first. The owners of cutters passing between the

Island of Guernsey and the French coast were loud in their outcries. They denounced this attack upon the Holy Scriptures and their monopoly. The chapels began to fulminate against it. One reverend gentleman, named Elihu, stigmatized the new steam-vessel as an "atheistical construction," and the sailing-boat was declared the only orthodox craft. The people saw the horns of the devil among the beasts which the fireship carried to and fro. This storm of protest continued a considerable time. At last, however, it began to be perceived that these animals arrived less tired and sold better, their meat being superior; that the sea risk was less also for passengers; that this mode of travelling was less expensive, shorter, and more sure; that they started at a fixed time, and arrived at a fixed time; that consignments of fish travelling faster arrived fresher, and that it was now possible to find a sale in the French markets for the surplus of great takes of fish so common in Guernsey. The butter, too, from the far-famed Guernsey cows, made the passage quicker in the "Devil Boat" than in the old sailing vessels, and lost nothing of its good quality, insomuch that Dinan, in Brittany, began to become a customer for it, as well as St. Brieuc and Rennes. In short, thanks to what they called "Lethierry's Galley," the people enjoyed safe travelling, regular communication, prompt and easy passages to and fro, an increase of circulation, an extension of markets and of commerce, and, finally, it was felt that it was necessary to patronize this "Devil Boat," which flew in the face of the Holy Scriptures, and brought wealth to the island. Some daring spirits even went so far as to express a positive satisfaction at it. *Sieur Landoys*, the registrar, bestowed his approval upon the vessel—an undoubted piece of impartiality on his part, as he did not like *Lethierry*. For, first of all, *Lethierry* was entitled to the dignity of "Mess," while *Landoys* was merely "Sieur *Landoys*." Then, although registrar of St. Peter's Port, *Landoys* was a parishioner of St. Sampson. Now, there was not in the entire parish another man besides them devoid of prejudices. It

seemed little enough, therefore, to indulge themselves with a detestation of each other. Two of a trade, says the proverb, rarely agree.

Sieur Landoys, however, had the honesty to support the steamboat. Others followed *Landoys*. By little and little, these facts multiplied. The growth of opinion is like the rising tide. Time and the continued and increasing success of the venture, with the evidence of real service rendered and the improvement in the general welfare, gradually converted the people; and the day at length arrived when, with the exception of a few wiseacres, every one admired "*Lethierry's Galley*."

It would probably win less admiration nowadays. This steamboat of forty years since would doubtless provoke a smile among our modern boat-builders; for this marvel was ill-shaped; this prodigy was clumsy and infirm.

The distance between our grand Atlantic steam-vessels of the present day and the boats with wheel-paddles which *Denis Papin* floated on the *Fulda* in 1707, is not greater than that between a three-decker, like the *Montebello*, 200 feet long, having a mainyard of 115 feet carrying a weight of 3000 tons, 1100 men, 120 guns, 10,000 cannon-balls, and 160 packages of canister, belching forth at every broadside, when in action, 3300 pounds of iron, and spreading to the wind, when it moves, 5600 square mètres of canvas, and the old Danish galley of the second century, discovered, full of stone hatchets, and bows and clubs, in the mud of the seashore, at *Wester-Satrup*, and preserved at the *Hotel de Ville* at *Flensburg*.

Exactly one hundred years—from 1707 to 1807—separate the first paddle-boat of *Papin* from the first steamboat of *Fulton*. *Lethierry's* galley was assuredly a great improvement upon those two rough sketches; but it was itself only a sketch. For all that, it was a masterpiece in its way. Every scientific discovery in embryo presents that double aspect—a monster in the foetus, a marvel in the germ.

V.

THE DEVIL BOAT.

"LETHIERRY'S GALLEY" was not masted with a view to sailing well; a fact which was not a defect; it is, indeed, one of the laws of naval construction. Besides, her motive power being steam, her sails were only accessory. A paddle steamboat, moreover, is almost insensible to sails. The new steam-vessel was too short, round, and thick-set. She had too much bow, and too great a breadth of quarter. The daring of inventors had not yet reached the point of making a steam-vessel light; Lethierry's boat had some of the defects of Gilliatt's Dutch sloop. She pitched very little, but she rolled a good deal. Her paddle-boxes were too high. She had too much beam for her length. The massive machinery encumbered her, and to make her capable of carrying a heavy cargo, her constructors had raised her bulwarks to an unusual height, giving to the vessel the defects of old seventy-fours, a bastard model which would have to be cut down to render them really seaworthy, or fit to go into action. Being short, she ought to have been able to veer quickly—the time employed in a manœuvre of that kind being in proportion to the length of the vessel—but her weight deprived her of the advantage of her shortness. Her midship-frame was too broad, a fact which retarded her; the resistance of the sea being proportioned to the largest section below the water-line, and to the square of the speed. Her prow was vertical, which would not be regarded as a fault at the present day, but at that period this portion of the construction was invariably sloped at an angle of forty-five degrees. All the curving lines of the hull agreed well together. The rudder was the old-fashioned bar-rudder, not the wheeled one of the present time. Two skiffs, a species of *you-yous*, were suspended to the davits. The vessel had four anchors; the sheet anchor, the second or working anchor, and two bower anchors. These four anchors, slung by chains, were moved, according to the occasion, by the great capstan of the poop, or by the small capstan

at the prow. At that period the pump windlass had not superseded the intermitting efforts of the old handspike. Having only two bower-anchors, one on the starboard and the other on the larboard side, the vessel could not move conveniently in certain winds, though she could aid herself at such times with the second anchor. Her speed was six knots an hour. When lying-to she rode well. Take her as she was, "Lethierry's Galley" was a good sea boat; but people felt, that in moments of danger from reefs or water-spouts, she would be hardly manageable. Unhappily her build made her roll about on the waves, with a perpetual creaking like that of a new shoe.

She was, above all, a merchandise boat, and, like all ships built more for commerce than for fighting, was constructed exclusively with a view to stowage. She carried few passengers. The transport of cattle rendered stowage difficult and very peculiar. Vessels carried bullocks at that time in the hold, which was a complication of the difficulty. At the present day they are stowed on the fore-deck. The paddle-boxes of Lethierry's "Devil Boat" were painted white, the hull, down to the water-line, red, and all the rest of the vessel black, according to the somewhat ugly fashion of this century. When empty she drew seven feet of water, and when laden fourteen.

With regard to the engine, it was of considerable power. To speak exactly, its power was equal to that of one horse to every three tons burden, which is almost equal to that of a tugboat. The paddles were well placed, a little in advance of the centre of gravity of the vessel. The maximum pressure of the engine was equal to two atmospheres. It consumed a great deal of coal, although it was constructed on the condensation and expansion principles. For that period the engine seemed, and indeed was, admirable. It had been constructed in France, at the works at Bercy. Mess Lethierry had roughly sketched it: the engineer who had constructed it in accordance with his diagram was dead, so that the engine was unique, and probably could not have

been replaced. The designer still lived, but the constructor was no more.

The engine had cost forty thousand francs.

Lethierry had himself constructed the "Devil Boat" upon the great covered stocks by the side of the first tower between St. Peter's Port and St. Sampson. He had been to Brême to buy the wood. All his skill as a shipwright was exhausted in its construction; his ingenuity might be seen in the planks, the seams of which were straight and even, and covered with sarangousti, an Indian mastic, better than resin. The sheathing was well beaten. To remedy the roundness of the hull, Lethierry had fitted out a boom at the bowsprit, which allowed him to add a false spritsail to the regular one. On the day of the launch, he cried aloud "At last I am afloat!" The vessel was successful, in fact, as the reader has already learnt.

Either by chance or design she had been launched on the 14th of July, the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille. On that day, mounted upon the bridge between the two paddle-boxes, looked Lethierry upon the sea, and exclaimed, "It is your turn now! The Parisians took the Bastille, now science takes the sea."

Lethierry's boat made the voyage from Guernsey to St. Malo once a week. She started on the Tuesday morning, and returned on the Friday evening, in time for the Saturday market. She was a stronger craft than any of the largest coasting sloops in all the Archipelago, and her capacity being in proportion to her dimensions, one of her voyages was equal to four voyages of an ordinary boat in the same trade; hence they were very profitable. The reputation of a vessel depends on its stowage, and Lethierry was an admirable stower of cargo. When he was no longer able to work himself, he trained up a sailor to undertake this duty. At the end of two years, the steamboat brought in a clear seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling a year, or eighteen thousand francs. The pound sterling of Guernsey is worth twenty-four francs only; that of England twenty-five, and that of Jersey

twenty-six. These differences are less unimportant than they seem: the banks, at all events, know how to turn them to advantage.

VI.

LETHIERRY'S EXALTATION.

THE "Devil Boat" prospered. Mess Lethierry began to look forward to the time when he should be called "Monsieur." At Guernsey, people do not become "monsieurs" at one bound. Between the plain man and the gentleman, there is quite a scale to climb. To begin with, we have the simple name, plain "Peter," let us suppose; the second step is "Neighbor Peter;" the third, "Father Peter;" the fourth, "Sieur Peter;" the fifth, "Mess Peter;" and then we reach the summit in "Monsieur Peter."

This scale ascending thus from the ground is carried to still greater heights. All the upper classes of England join on and continue it. Here are the various steps, becoming more and more glorious. Above the Monsieur, or "Mr.," there is the "Esquire;" above the squire, the knight; above the knight, still rising, we have the baronet, the Scotch laird, the baron, the viscount, the earl (called count in France, and jarl in Norway); the marquis, the duke, the prince of the blood royal, and the king: so, by degrees, we ascend from the people to the middle class, from the middle class to the baronetage, from the baronetage to the peerage, from the peerage to royalty.

Thanks to his successful ingenuity, thanks to steam, and his engines, and the "Devil Boat," Mess Lethierry was fast becoming an important personage. When building his vessel he had been compelled to borrow money. He had become indebted at Brême, he had become indebted at St. Malo; but every year he diminished his obligations.

He had, moreover, purchased on credit, at the very entrance to the port of St. Sampson, a pretty stone-built house, entirely new, situate between the sea and a garden. On the corner of this house was

inscribed the name of the "Bravées." Its front formed a part of the wall of the port itself, and it was remarkable for a double row of windows: on the north, alongside a little enclosure filled with flowers, and on the south commanding a view of the ocean. It had thus two *façades*, one open to the tempest and the sea, the other looking into a garden filled with roses.

These two frontages seemed made for the two inmates of the house—Mess Lethierry and Déruchette.

The "Bravées" was popular at St. Sampson, for Mess Lethierry had at length become a popular man. This popularity was due partly to his good nature, his devotedness, and his courage; partly to the number of lives he had saved; and a great deal to his success, and to the fact that he had awarded to St. Sampson the honor of being the port of the departure and arrival of the new steamboat. Having made the discovery that the "Devil Boat" was decidedly a success, St. Peter's, the capital, desired to obtain it for that port, but Lethierry held fast to St. Sampson. It was his native town. "It was there that I was first pitched into the water," he used to say; hence his great local popularity. His position as a small landed proprietor paying land-tax, made him, what they call in Guernsey, an *un-habitant*. He was chosen *douzenier*. The poor sailor had mounted five out of six steps of the Guernsey social scale; he had attained the dignity of "Mess;" he was rapidly approaching the Monsieur; and who could predict whether he might not even rise higher than that? who could say that they might not one day find in the almanac of Guernsey, under the heading of "Nobility and Gentry," the astonishing and superb inscription,—*Lethierry, Esq.*?

But Mess Lethierry had nothing of vanity in his nature, or he had no sense of it; or if he had, disdained it: to know that he was useful was his greatest pleasure; to be popular touched him less than being necessary; he had, as we have already said, only two objects of delight, and consequently only two ambitions: the Durande and Déruchette.

However this may have been, he had

embarked in the lottery of the sea, and had gained the chief prize.

This chief prize was the Durande steaming away in all her pride.

VII.

THE SAME GODFATHER AND THE SAME PATRON SAINT.

HAVING created his steamboat, Lethierry had christened it: he had called it Durande—"La Durande." We will speak of her henceforth by no other name; we will claim the liberty, also, in spite of typographical usage, of not italicizing this name Durande; conforming in this to the notion of Mess Lethierry, in whose eyes La Durande was almost a living person.

Durande and Déruchette are the same name. Déruchette is the diminutive.

This diminutive is very common in France.

In the country the names of saints are endowed with all these diminutives as well as all their augmentatives. One might suppose there were several persons when there is, in fact, only one. This system of patrons and patronesses under different names is by no means rare. Lise, Lisette, Lisa, Elisa, Isabelle, Lisbeth, Betsy, all these are simply Elizabeth. It is probable that Mahout, Maclou, Malo, and Magloire are the same saint: this, however, we do not vouch for.

St. Durande is a saint of l'Angoumois, and of the Charente; whether she is an orthodox member of the calendar is a question for the Bollandists: orthodox or not, she has been made the patron saint of numerous chapels.

It was while Lethierry was a young sailor at Rochefort that he had made the acquaintance of this saint, probably in the person of some pretty Charantaise, perhaps in that of the grisette with the white nails. The saint had remained sufficiently in his memory for him to give the name to the two things which he loved most—Durande to the steamboat, Déruchette to the girl.

Of one he was the father, of the other the uncle.

Déruchette was the daughter of a brother who had died: she was an orphan child: he had adopted her, and had taken the place both of father and mother.

Déruchette was not only his niece, she was his godchild; he had held her in his arms at the baptismal font; it was he who had chosen her patron saint, Durande, and her Christian name, Déruchette.

Déruchette, as we have said, was born at St. Peter's Port. Her name was inscribed at its date on the register of the parish.

As long as the niece was a child, and the uncle poor, nobody took heed of her appellation of Déruchette; but when the little girl became a miss, and the sailor a gentleman, the name of Déruchette shocked the feelings of Guernsey society. The uncouthness of the sound astonished every one. Folks asked Mess Lethierry "why Déruchette?" He answered, "It is a very good name in its way." Several attempts were made to get him to obtain a change in the baptismal name, but he would be no party to them. One day, a fine lady of the upper circle of society in St. Sampson, the wife of a rich retired iron-founder, said to Mess Lethierry, "In future, I shall call your daughter Nancy."

"If names of country towns are in fashion," said he, "why not Lons le Saulnier?" The fine lady did not yield her point, and on the morrow said, "We are determined not to have it Déruchette; I have found for your daughter a pretty name—*Marianne*." "A very pretty name, indeed," replied Mess Lethierry, "composed of two words which signify—a husband and an ass."* He held fast to Déruchette.

It would be a mistake to infer from Lethierry's pun that he had no wish to see his niece married. He desired to see her married, certainly; but in his own way: he intended her to have a husband after his own heart, one who would work hard, and whose wife would have little to do. He liked rough hands in a man, and delicate ones in a woman. To prevent Déruchette spoiling her pretty hands he had always brought her up like a young lady; he had

provided her with a music-master, a piano, a little library, and a few needles and threads in a pretty work-basket. She was, indeed, more often reading than stitching; more often playing than reading. This was as Mess Lethierry wished it. To be charming was all that he expected of her. He had reared the young girl like a flower. Whoever has studied the character of sailors will understand this: rude and hard in their nature, they have an odd partiality for grace and delicacy. To realize the idea of the uncle, the niece ought to have been rich; so indeed felt Mess Lethierry. His steamboat voyaged for this end. The mission of Durande was to provide a marriage portion for Déruchette.

VIII.

BONNIE DUNDEE.

DÉRUCHETTE occupied the prettiest room at the Bravées. It had two windows, was furnished with various articles made of fine-grained mahogany, had a bed with four curtains, green and white, and looked out upon the garden, and beyond it towards the high hill, on which stands the Vale Castle. Gilliatt's house, the Bû de la Rue, was on the other side of this hill.

Déruchette had her music and piano in this chamber; she accompanied herself on the instrument when singing the melody which she preferred—the melancholy Scottish air of "Bonnie Dundee." The very spirit of night breathes in this melody; but her voice was full of the freshness of dawn. The contrast was quaint and pleasing; people said, "Miss Déruchette is at her piano."

The passers-by at the foot of the hill stopped sometimes before the wall of the garden of the Bravées to listen to that sweet voice and plaintive song.

Déruchette was the very embodiment of joy as she went to and fro in the house. She brought with her a perpetual spring. She was beautiful, but more pretty than beautiful; and still more graceful than pretty. She reminded the good old pilots, friends of Mess Lethierry, of that princess

* A play upon the French words, *mar* and *âne*.

in the song which the soldiers and sailors sing, who was so beautiful :

“Qu'elle passait pour telle dans le régiment.”

Mess Lethierry used to say, “She has a head of hair like a ship's cable.”

From her infancy she had been remarkable for beauty. The learned in such matters had grave doubts about her nose, but the little one having probably determined to be pretty, had finally satisfied their requirements. She grew to girlhood without any serious loss of beauty; her nose became neither too long nor too short; and when grown up, her critics admitted her to be charming.

She never addressed her uncle otherwise than as father.

Lethierry allowed her to soil her fingers a little in gardening, and even in some kind of household duties: she watered her beds of pink hollyhocks, purple foxgloves, perennial phloxes, and scarlet herb benets. She took good advantage of the climate of Guernsey, so favorable to flowers. She had, like many other persons there, aloes in the open ground, and, what is more difficult, she succeeded in cultivating the Nepaulese cinquefoil. Her little kitchen-garden was scientifically arranged; she was able to produce from it several kinds of rare vegetables. She sowed Dutch cauliflower and Brussels cabbages, which she thinned out in July, turnips for August, endive for September, short parsnip for the autumn, and rampions for winter. Mess Lethierry did not interfere with her in this, so long as she did not handle the spade and rake too much, or meddle with the coarser kinds of garden labor. He had provided her with two servants, one named Grace, and the other Douce, which are favorite names in Guernsey. Grace and Douce did the hard work of the house and garden, and they had the right to have red hands.

With regard to Mess Lethierry, his room was a little retreat with a view over the harbor, and communicating with the great lower room of the ground floor, on which was situated the door of the house, near which the various staircases met.

His room was furnished with his ham-

mock, his chronometer, and his pipe: there were also a table and a chair. The ceiling had been whitewashed, as well as the four walls. A fine marine map, bearing the inscription *W. Faden*, 5, Charing Cross, Geographer to His Majesty, and representing the Channel Islands, was nailed up at the side of the door, and on the left, stretched out and fastened with other nails, appeared one of those large cotton handkerchiefs on which are printed, in colors, the signals of all countries in the world, having at the four corners the standards of France, Russia, Spain, and the United States, and in the centre the union jack of England.

Douce and Grace were two faithful creatures within certain limits. Douce was good-natured enough, and Grace was probably good-looking. Douce was unmarried, and had secretly “a gallant.” In the Channel Islands the word is common, as indeed is the fact itself. The two girls regarded as servants had something of the Creole in their character, a sort of slowness in their movements, not out of keeping with the Norman spirit pervading the relations of servant and master in the Channel Islands. Grace, coquettish and good-looking, was always scanning the future with a nervous anxiety. This arose from the fact of her not only having, like Douce, “a gallant,” but also, as the scandal loving averred, a sailor husband, whose return one day was a thing she dreaded. This, however, does not concern us. In a household less austere and less innocent, Douce would have continued to be the servant, but Grace would have become the *soubrette*. The dangerous talents of Grace were lost upon a young mistress so pure and good as Déruchette. For the rest, the intrigues of Douce and Grace were cautiously concealed. Mess Lethierry knew nothing of such matters, and no token of them had ever reached Déruchette.

The lower room of the ground floor, a hall with a large fireplace and surrounded with benches and tables, had served in the last century as a meeting-place for a conventicle of French Protestant refugees. The sole ornament of the bare stone wall

was a sheet of parchment, set in a frame of black wood, on which were represented some of the charitable deeds of the great Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux. Some poor diocesans of this famous orator, surnamed the "Eagle," persecuted by him at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and driven to take shelter at Guernsey, had hung this picture on the wall to preserve the remembrance of those facts. The spectator who had the patience to decipher a rude handwriting in faded ink might have learnt the following facts, which are but little known:—"29th October, 1685, Monsieur the Bishop of Meaux, appeals to the king to destroy the temples of Morcef and Nanteuil."—"2d April, 1686, Arrest of Cochard, father and son, for their religious opinions, at the request of Monsieur the Bishop of Meaux. Released: the Cochards having recanted."—"28th October, 1699, Monsieur the Bishop of Meaux sent to Mde. Pontchartrain a petition of remonstrance, pointing out that it will be necessary to place the young ladies named Chalandes and de Neuville, who are of the reformed religion, in the House of the 'New Catholics' at Paris."—"7th July, 1703, the king's order executed as requested by Monsieur the Bishop of Meaux, for shutting up in an asylum Baudouin and his wife, two bad Catholics of Fublaines."

At the end of the hall, near the door of Mess Lethierry's room, was a little corner with a wooden partition, which had been the Huguenot's sanctum, and had become, thanks to its row of rails and a small hole to pass paper or money through, the steam-boat office; that is to say, the office of the Durande, kept by Mess Lethierry in person. Upon the old oaken reading-desk, where once rested the Holy Bible, lay a great ledger with its alternate pages headed Dr. and Cr.

IX.

THE MAN WHO DISCOVERED RANTAINÉ'S CHARACTER.

As long as Mess Lethierry had been able to do duty, he had commanded the Durande, and had had no other pilot or cap-

tain but himself; but a time had come, as we have said, when he had been compelled to find a successor. He had chosen for that purpose Sieur Clubin, of Torteval, a taciturn man. Sieur Clubin had a character upon the coast for strict probity. He became the *alter ego*, the double of Mess Lethierry.

Sieur Clubin, although he had rather the look of a notary than of a sailor, was a mariner of rare skill. He had all the talents which are required to meet dangers of every kind. He was a skilful stower, a safe man aloft, an able and careful boatswain, a powerful steersman, an experienced pilot, and a bold captain. He was prudent, and he carried his prudence sometimes to the point of daring, which is a great quality at sea. His natural apprehensiveness of danger was tempered by a strong instinct of what was possible in an emergency. He was one of those mariners who will face risks to a point perfectly well known to themselves, and who generally manage to come successfully out of every peril. Every certainty which a man can command, dealing with so fickle an element as the sea, he possessed. Sieur Clubin, moreover, was a renowned swimmer; he was one of that race of men broken into the buffeting of the waves, who can remain as long as they please in the water—who can start from the Havre-des-Pas at Jersey, double the Colettes, swim round the Hermitage and Castle Elizabeth, and return in two hours to the point from which they started. He came from Torteval, where he had the reputation of often having swum across the passage so much dreaded, from the Hanway rocks to the point of Pleinmont.

One circumstance which had recommended Sieur Clubin to Mess Lethierry more than any other, was his having judged correctly the character of Rantaine. He had pointed out to Lethierry the dishonesty of the man, and had said "Rantaine will rob you." His prediction was verified. More than once—in matters, it is true, not very important—Mess Lethierry had put his ever-scrupulous honesty to the proof; and he freely communicated with him on the subject of his affairs.

Mess Lethierry used to say, "A good conscience expects to be treated with perfect confidence."

X.

LONG YARNS.

MESS LETHIERRY, for the sake of his own ease, always wore his seafaring clothes, and preferred his tarpaulin overcoat to his pilot jacket. Déruchette felt vexed, occasionally, about this peculiarity. Nothing is prettier than a pouting beauty. She laughed and scolded. "My dear father," she would say, "what a smell of pitch!" and she would give him a gentle tap upon his broad shoulders.

This good old seaman had gathered from his voyages many wonderful stories. He had seen at Madagascar birds' feathers, three of which sufficed to make a roof of a house. He had seen in India, field sorrel, the stalks of which were nine inches high. In New Holland he had seen troops of turkeys and geese led about and guarded by a bird, like a flock by a shepherd's dog; this bird was called the Agami. He had visited elephants' cemeteries. In Africa, he had encountered gorillas, a terrible species of man-monkey. He knew the ways of all the ape tribe, from the wild dog-faced monkey, which he called the *Macaco-bravo*, to the howling monkey or *Macaco barbado*. In Chili, he had seen a pouched monkey move the compassion of the huntsman by showing its little one. He had seen in California a hollow trunk of a tree fall to the ground, so vast that a man on horseback could ride one hundred paces inside. In Morocco, he had seen the Mozabites and the Bisskris fighting with matraks and bars of iron—the Bisskris, because they had been called *kelbs*, which means dogs; and the Mozabites, because they had been treated as *khamisi*, which means people of the fifth sect. He had seen in China the pirate Chanh-thong-quan-larh-Quoi cut to pieces for having assassinated the Ap of a village. At Thudanmot, he had seen a lion carry off an old woman in the open market-place. He was present at the arrival of the Great Serpent brought from Canton to Saigon to celebrate

in the pagoda of Cho-len the fête of Quannam, the goddess of navigators. He had beheld the great Quan-Sû among the Moi. At Rio de Janeiro, he had seen the Brazilian ladies in the evening put little balls of gauze into their hair, each containing a beautiful kind of firefly; and the whole forming a head-dress of little twinkling lights. He had combated in Paraguay with swarms of enormous ants and spiders, big and downy as an infant's head, and compassing with their long legs a third of a yard, and attacking men by pricking them with their bristles, which enter the skin as sharp as arrows, and raise painful blisters. On the river Arinos, a tributary of the Tocantins, in the virgin forests to the north of Diamantina, he had determined the existence of the famous bat-shaped people, the Murcilagos, or men who are born with white hair and red eyes, who live in the shady solitudes of the woods, sleep by day, awake by night, and fish and hunt in the dark, seeing better then than by the light of the moon. He told how, near Beyrout, once in an encampment of an expedition of which he formed part, a rain gauge belonging to one of the party happened to be stolen from a tent. A wizard, wearing two or three strips of leather only, and looking like a man having nothing on but his braces, thereupon rang a bell at the end of a horn so violently, that a hyena finally answered the summons by bringing back the missing instrument. The hyena was, in fact, the thief. These veritable histories bore a strong resemblance to fictions; but they amused Déruchette.

The *poupée* or "doll" of the Durande, as the people of the Channel Islands call the figure-head of a ship, was the connecting link between the vessel and Lethierry's niece.

The *poupée* of the Durande was particularly dear to Mess Lethierry. He had instructed the carver to make it resemble Déruchette. It looked like a rude attempt to cut out a face with a hatchet; or like a clumsy log trying hard to look like a girl.

This unshapely block produced a great effect upon Mess Lethierry's imagination. He looked upon it with an almost super-

stitious admiration. His faith in it was complete. He was able to trace in it an excellent resemblance to Déruchette. Thus the dogma resembles the truth, and the idol the deity.

Mess Lethierry had two grand fête days in every week; one was Tuesday, the other Friday. His first delight consisted in seeing the Durande weigh anchor; his second in seeing her enter the port again. He leaned upon his elbows at the window contemplating his work, and was happy.

On Fridays, the presence of Mess Lethierry at his window was a signal. When people passing the Bravées saw him lighting his pipe, they said, "Ay! the steamboat is in sight." One kind of smoke was the herald of the other.

The Durande, when she entered the port, made her cable fast to a huge iron ring under Mess Lethierry's window, and fixed in the basement of the house. On those nights Lethierry slept soundly in his hammock, with a soothing consciousness of the presence of Déruchette asleep in her room near him, and of the Durande moored opposite.

The moorings of the Durande were close to the great bell of the port. A little strip of quay passed thence before the door of the Bravées.

The quay, the Bravées and its house, the garden, the alleys bordered with edges, and the greater part even of the surrounding houses, no longer exist. The demand for Guernsey granite has invaded these too. The whole of this part of the town is now occupied by stone-cutters' yards.

XI.

MATRIMONIAL PROSPECTS.

DÉRUCHETTE was approaching womanhood, and was still unmarried.

Mess Lethierry in bringing her up to have white hands had also rendered her somewhat fastidious. A training of that kind has its disadvantages; but Lethierry was himself still more fastidious. He would have liked to have provided at the same time for both his idols; to have found in the guide and companion of the one a commander for the other. What is a hus-

band but the pilot on the voyage of matrimony? Why not then the same conductor for the vessel and for the girl? The affairs of a household have their tides, their ebbs and flows, and he who knows how to steer a bark, ought to know how to guide a woman's destiny, subject as both are to the influences of the moon and the wind. Sieur Ciubin being only fifteen years younger than Lethierry, would necessarily be only a provisional master for the Durande. It would be necessary to find a young captain, a permanent master, a true successor of the founder, inventor, and creator of the first Channel steamboat. A captain for the Durande who should come up to his ideal, would have been, already, almost a son-in-law in Lethierry's eyes. Why not make him a son-in-law in a double sense? The idea pleased him. The husband *in posse* of Déruchette haunted his dreams. His ideal was a powerful seaman, tanned and browned by weather, a sea athlete. This, however, was not exactly the ideal of Déruchette. Her dreams, if dreams they could even be called, were of a more ethereal character.

The uncle and the niece were at all events agreed in not being in haste to seek a solution of these problems. When Déruchette began to be regarded as a probable heiress, a crowd of suitors had presented themselves. Attentions under these circumstances are not generally worth much. Mess Lethierry felt this. He would grumble out the old French proverb, "*A maiden of gold, a suitor of brass.*" He politely showed the fortune-seekers to the door. He was content to wait, and so was Déruchette.

It was, perhaps, a singular fact, that he had little inclination for the local aristocracy. In that respect Mess Lethierry showed himself not entirely English. It will hardly be believed that he even refused for Déruchette a Ganduel of Jersey, and a Bugnet-Nicolin of Sark. People were bold enough to affirm, although we doubt if this were possible, that he had even declined the proposals of a member of the family of Edou, which is evidently descended from "Edou-ard" (Anglicè Edward) the Confessor.

XII.

AN ANOMALY IN THE CHARACTER OF
LETHIERRY.

MESS LETHIERRY had a failing, and a serious one. He detested a priest; though not as an individual, but as an institution. Reading one day—for he used to read—in a work of Voltaire—for he would even read Voltaire—the remark, that priests “have something cat-like in their nature,” he laid down the book and was heard to mutter, “Then, I suppose, I have something dog-like in mine.”

It must be remembered that the priests—Lutheran and Calvinist, as well as Catholic—had vigorously combated the new “Devil Boat,” and had persecuted its inventor. To be a sort of revolutionist in the art of navigation, to introduce a spirit of progress in the Norman Archipelago, to disturb the peace of the poor little island of Guernsey with a new invention, was in their eyes, as we have not concealed from the reader, an abominable and most condemnable rashness. Nor had they omitted to condemn it pretty loudly. It must not be forgotten that we are now speaking of the Guernsey clergy of a bygone generation, very different from that of the present time, who in almost all the local places of worship display a laudable sympathy with progress. They had embarrassed Lethierry in a hundred ways; every sort of resisting force which can be found in sermons and discourses had been employed against him. Detested by the churchmen, he naturally came to detest them in his turn. Their hatred was the extenuating circumstance to be taken into account in judging of his.

But it must be confessed that his dislike for priests was, in some degree, in his very nature. It was hardly necessary for them to hate him in order to inspire him with aversion. As he said, he moved among them like the dog among cats. He had an antipathy to them, not only in idea, but in what is more difficult to analyze, his instincts. He felt their secret claws, and showed his teeth; sometimes, it must be confessed, a little at random and out of season. It is a mistake to make no dis-

tinctions: a dislike in the mass is a prejudice. The good Savoyard curé would have found no favor in his eyes. It is not certain that a worthy priest was even a possible thing in Lethierry’s mind. His philosophy was carried so far that his good sense sometimes abandoned him. There is such a thing as the intolerance of tolerants, as well as the violence of moderates. But Lethierry was at bottom too good-natured to be a thorough hater. He did not attack so much as avoid. He kept the church people at a distance. He suffered evil at their hands; but he confined himself to not wishing them any good. The shade of difference, in fact, between his aversion and theirs, lay in the fact that they bore animosity, while he had only a strong antipathy. Small as is the island of Guernsey, it has, unfortunately, plenty of room for differences of religion; there, to take the broad distinction, is the Catholic faith and the Protestant faith; every form of worship has its temple or chapel. In Germany, at Heidelberg, for example, people are not so particular; they divide a church in two, one half for St. Peter, the other half for Calvin, and between the two is a partition to prevent religious variances terminating in fisticuffs. The shares are equal; the Catholics have three altars, the Huguenots three altars. As the services are at the same hours, one bell summonses both denominations to prayers; it rings, in fact, both for God and for Satan, according as each pleases to regard it. Nothing can be more simple.

The phlegmatic character of the Germans favors, I suppose, this peculiar arrangement, but in Guernsey every religion has its own domicile; there is the orthodox parish and the heretic parish; the individual may choose. “Neither one nor the other” was the choice of Mess Lethierry.

This sailor, workman, philosopher, and parvenu trader, though a simple man in appearance, was by no means simple at bottom. He had his opinions and his prejudices. On the subject of the priests he was immovable; he would have entered the lists with Montlosier.

Occasionally he indulged in rather disrespectful jokes upon this subject. He had

certain odd expressions thereupon peculiar to himself, but significant enough. Going to confession he called "combing one's conscience." The little learning that he had—a certain amount of reading picked up here and there between the squalls at sea—did not prevent his making blunders in spelling. He made also mistakes in pronunciation, some of which, however, gave a double sense to his words, which might have been suspected of a sly intention.

Though he was a strong anti-papist, that circumstance was far from conciliating the Anglicans. He was no more liked by the Protestant rectors than by the Catholic curés. The enunciation of the greatest dogmas did not prevent his anti-theological temper bursting forth. Accident, for example, having once brought him to hear a sermon on eternal punishment, by the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode—a magnificent discourse, filled from one end to the other with sacred texts, proving the everlasting pains, the tortures, the torments, the perditions, the inexorable chastisements, the burnings without end, the inextinguishable maledictions, the wrath of the Almighty, the celestial fury, the divine vengeance, and other incontestable realities—he was heard to say as he was going out in the midst of the faithful flock, "You see, I have an odd notion of my own on this matter; I imagine God as a merciful being."

This leaven of atheism was doubtless due to his sojourn in France.

Although a Guernsey man of pure extraction, he was called in the island "the Frenchman;" but chiefly on account of his "improper" manner of speaking. He did not indeed conceal the truth from himself. He was impregnated with ideas subversive of established institutions. His obstinacy in constructing the "Devil Boat" had proved that. He used to say, "I have a little of '89 in my head"—a doubtful sort of avowal. These were not his only indiscretions. In France "to preserve appearances," in England "to be respectable," is the chief condition of a quiet life. To be respectable implies a multitude of little observances, from the strict keeping of

Sunday down to the careful tying of a cravat. "To act so that nobody may point at you;" this is the terrible social law. To be pointed at with the finger is almost the same thing as an anathematization. Little towns, always hotbeds of gossip, are remarkable for that isolating malignancy, which is like the tremendous malediction of the Church seen through the wrong end of the telescope. The bravest are afraid of this ordeal. They are ready to confront the storm, the fire of cannon, but they shrink at the glance of "Mrs. Grundy." Mess Lethierry was more obstinate than logical; but under pressure even his obstinacy would bend. He put—to use another of his phrases, eminently suggestive of latent compromises, not always pleasant to avow—"a little water in his wine." He kept aloof from the clergy, but he did not absolutely close his door against them. On official occasions, and at the customary epochs of pastoral visits, he received with sufficiently good grace both the Lutheran rector and the Papist chaplain. He had even, though at distant intervals, accompanied Déruchette to the Anglican parish church, to which Déruchette herself, as we have said, only went on the four great festivals of the year.

On the whole, these little concessions, which always cost him a pang, irritated him; and far from inclining him towards the Church people, only increased his inward disinclination to them. He compensated himself by more raillery. His nature, in general so devoid of bitterness, had no uncharitable side except this. To alter him, however, was impossible.

In fact, this was in his very temperament, and was beyond his own power to control.

Every sort of priest or clergyman was distasteful to him. He had a little of the old revolutionary want of reverence. He did not distinguish between one form of worship and another. He did not do justice to that great step in the progress of ideas, the denial of the real presence. His short-sightedness in these matters even prevented his perceiving any essential difference between a minister and an abbé.

A reverend doctor and a reverend father were pretty nearly the same to him. He used to say, "Wesley is not more to my taste than Loyola." When he saw a reverend pastor walking with his wife, he would turn to look at them, and mutter, "a married priest," in a tone which brought out all the absurdity which those words had in the ears of Frenchmen at that time. He used to relate how, on his last voyage to England, he had seen the "Bishopess" of London. His dislike for marriages of that sort amounted almost to disgust. "Gown and gown do not mate well," he would say. The sacerdotal function was to him in the nature of a distinct sex. It would have been natural to him to have said, "Neither a man nor a woman, only a priest;" and he had the bad taste to apply to the Anglican and the Roman Catholic clergy the same disdainful epithets. He confounded the two cassocks in the same phraseology. He did not take the trouble to vary in favor of Catholics or Lutherans, or whatever they might be, the figures of speech common among military men of that period. He would say to Déruchette, "Marry whom you please, provided you do not marry a parson."

XIII.

THOUGHTLESSNESS ADDS A GRACE TO BEAUTY.

A WORD once said, Mess Lethierry remembered it: a word once said, Déruchette soon forgot it. Here was another difference between the uncle and the niece.

Brought up in the peculiar way already described, Déruchette was little accustomed to responsibility. There is a latent danger in an education not sufficiently serious, which cannot be too much insisted on. It is perhaps unwise to endeavor to make a child happy too soon.

So long as she was happy, Déruchette thought all was well. She knew, too, that it was always a pleasure to her uncle to see her pleased. The religious sentiment in her nature was satisfied with going to the parish church four times in the year.

We have seen her in her Christmas-day toilet. Of life, she was entirely ignorant. She had a disposition which one day might lead her to love passionately. Meanwhile she was contented.

She sang by fits and starts, chatted by fits and starts, enjoyed the hour as it passed, fulfilled some little duty, and was gone again, and was delightful in all. Add to all this the English sort of liberty which she enjoyed. In England the very infants go alone, girls are their own mistresses, and adolescence is almost wholly unrestrained. Such are the differences of manners. Later, how many of these free maidens become female slaves? I use the word in its least odious sense; I mean that they are free in the development of their nature, but slaves to duty.

Déruchette awoke every morning with little thought of her actions of the day before. It would have troubled her a good deal to have had to give an account of how she had spent her time the previous week. All this, however, did not prevent her having certain hours of strange disquietude; times when some dark cloud seemed to pass over the brightness of her joy. Those azure depths are subject to such shadows! But clouds like these soon passed away. She quickly shook off such moods with a cheerful laugh, knowing neither why she had been sad, nor why she had regained her serenity. She was always at play. As a child, she would take delight in teasing the passers-by. She played practical jokes upon the boys. If the fiend himself had passed that way, she would hardly have spared him some ingenious trick. She was pretty and innocent; and she could abuse the immunity accorded to such qualities. She was ready with a smile, as a cat with a stroke of her claws. So much the worse for the victim of her scratches. She thought no more of them. Yesterday had no existence for her. She lived in the fullness of to-day. Such it is to have too much happiness fall to one's lot! With Déruchette impressions vanished like the melted snow.

BOOK IV.

THE BAGPIPE.

I.

STREAKS OF FIRE IN THE HORIZON.

GILLIATT had never spoken to Déruchette; he knew her from having seen her at a distance, as men know the morning star.

At the period when Déruchette had met Gilliatt on the road leading from St. Peter's Port to Vale, and had surprised him by tracing his name in the snow, she was just sixteen years of age. Only the evening before Mess Lethierry had said to her, "Come, no more childish tricks; you are a great girl."

That word "Gilliatt," written by the young maiden, had sunk into an unfathomed depth.

What were women to Gilliatt? He could not have answered that question himself. When he met one he generally inspired her with something of the timidity which he felt himself. He never spoke to a woman except from urgent necessity. He had never played the part of a "gallant" to any one of the country girls. When he found himself alone on the road, and perceived a woman coming towards him, he would climb over a fence, or bury himself in some copse: he even avoided old women. Once in his life he had seen a Parisian lady. A *Parisienne* on the wing was a strange event in Guernsey at that distant epoch; and Gilliatt had heard this gentle lady relate her little troubles in these words: "I am very much annoyed; I have got some spots of rain upon my bonnet. Pale buff is a shocking color for rain." Having found, some time afterwards between the leaves of a book, an old engraving, representing "a lady of the Chaussée d'Antin" in full dress, he had stuck it against the wall at home as a souvenir of this remarkable apparition.

On that Christmas morning when he had met Déruchette, and when she had written his name and disappeared laughing, he re-

turned home, scarcely conscious of why he had gone out. That night he slept little; he was dreaming of a thousand things: that it would be well to cultivate black radishes in the garden; that he had not seen the boat from Sark pass by: had anything happened to it? Then he remembered that he had seen the white stonecrop in flower, a rare thing at that season. He had never known exactly who was the woman who had reared him, and he made up his mind that she must have been his mother, and thought of her with redoubled tenderness. He called to mind the lady's clothing in the old leathern trunk. He thought that the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode would probably one day or other be appointed dean of St. Peter's Port and surrogate of the bishop, and that the rectory of St. Sampson would become vacant. Next, he remembered that the morrow of Christmas would be the twenty-seventh day of the moon, and that consequently high water would be at twenty-one minutes past three, the half-ebb at a quarter past seven, low water at thirty-three minutes past nine, and half-flood at thirty-nine minutes past twelve. He recalled, in the most trifling details, the costume of the Highlander who had sold him the bagpipe; his bonnet with a thistle ornament, his claymore, his close-fitting short jacket, his philabeg ornamented with a pocket, and his snuff-horn, his pin set with a Scottish stone, his two girdles, his sash and belts, his sword, cutlass, dirk, and skene-dhu; his black sheathed knife, with its black handle ornamented with two cairngorms, and the bare knees of the soldier; his socks, gaiters, and buckled shoes. This highly-equipped figure became a spectre in his imagination, which pursued him with a sense of feverishness as he sunk into oblivion. When he awoke it was full daylight, and his first thought was of Déruchette.

The next night he slept more soundly, but he was dreaming again of the Scottish soldier. In the midst of his sleep he remembered that the after-Christmas sittings of the Chief Law Court would commence on the 21st of January. He dreamed also about the reverend Jaquemin Hérode.

He thought of *Déruchette*, and seemed to be in violent anger with her. He wished he had been a child again to throw stones at her windows. Then he thought that if he were a child again he should have his mother by his side, and he began to sob.

Gilliatt had a project at this time of going to pass three months at *Chousey*, or at the *Miriquiers*; but he did not go.

He walked no more along the road to *St. Peter's Port*.

He had an odd fancy that his name of "*Gilliatt*" had remained there traced upon the ground, and that the passers-by stopped to read it.

II.

THE UNKNOWN UNFOLDS ITSELF BY DEGREES.

On the other hand, Gilliatt had the satisfaction of seeing the *Bravées* every day. By some accident he was continually passing that way. His business seemed always to lead him by the path which passed under the wall of *Déruchette's* garden.

One morning, as he was walking along this path, he heard a market-woman who was returning from the *Bravées*, say to another: "*Mess Lethierry* is fond of sea-kale."

He dug in his garden of the *Bû de la Rue* a trench for sea-kale. The sea-kale is a vegetable which has a flavor like asparagus.

The wall of the garden of the *Bravées* was very low; it would have been easy to scale it. The idea of scaling it would have appeared, to him, terrible. But there was nothing to hinder his hearing, as any one else might, the voices of persons talking as he passed, in the rooms or in the garden. He did not listen, but he heard them. Once he could distinguish the voices of the two servants, *Grace* and *Douce*, disputing. It was a sound which belonged to the house, and their quarrel remained in his ears like a remembrance of music.

On another occasion, he distinguished a voice which was different, and which seemed to him to be the voice of *Déruchette*. He quickened his pace, and was soon out of hearing.

The words uttered by that voice, however, remained fixed in his memory. He repeated them at every instant. They were, "Will you please give me the little broom?"

By degrees he became bolder. He had the daring to stay awhile. One day it happened that *Déruchette* was singing at her piano, altogether invisible from without, although her window was open. The air was that of "*Bonnie Dundee*." He grew pale, but he screwed his courage to the point of listening.

Springtide came. One day Gilliatt enjoyed a beatific vision. The heavens were opened, and there, before his eyes, appeared *Déruchette*, watering lettuces in her little garden.

Soon afterwards he took to doing more than merely listening there. He watched her habits, observed her hours, and waited to catch a glimpse of her.

In all this he was very careful not to be seen.

The year advanced; the time came when the trellises were heavy with roses, and haunted by the butterflies. By little and little, he had come to conceal himself for hours behind her wall, motionless and silent, seen by no one, and holding his breath as *Déruchette* passed in and out of her garden. Men grow accustomed to poison by degrees.

From his hiding-place he could often hear the sound of *Déruchette* conversing with *Mess Lethierry* under a thick arch of leaves, in a spot where there was a garden-seat. The words came distinctly to his ears.

What a change had come over him! He had even descended to watch and listen. Alas! there is something of the character of a spy in every human heart.

There was another garden-seat, visible to him, and nearer. *Déruchette* would sit there sometimes.

From the flowers that he had observed her gathering he had guessed her taste in the matter of perfumes. The scent of the bindweed was her favorite; then the pink; then the honeysuckle; then the jasmine. The rose stood only fifth in the scale. She looked at the lilies, but did not smell them.

Gilliatt figured her in his imagination from this choice of odors. With each perfume he associated some perfection.

The very idea of speaking to Déruchette would have made his hair stand on end. A poor old rag-picker, whose wandering brought her, from time to time, into the little road leading under the inclosure of the Bravées, had occasionally remarked Gilliatt's assiduity beside the wall, and his devotion for this retired spot. Did she connect the presence of a man before this wall with the possibility of a woman behind it? Did she perceive that vague, invisible thread? Was she, in her decrepit mendicancy, still youthful enough to remember something of the old happier days? And could she, in this dark night and winter of her wretched life, still recognize the dawn? We know not: but it appears that, on one occasion, passing near Gilliatt at his post, she brought to bear upon him something as like a smile as she was still capable of, and muttered between her teeth, "It is getting warmer."

Gilliatt heard the words, and was struck by them. "It warms one," he muttered, with an inward note of interrogation. "It is getting warmer." What did the old woman mean?

He repeated the phrase mechanically all day, but he could not guess its meaning.

III.

THE AIR "BONNIE DUNDEE" FINDS AN ECHO ON THE HILL.

It was in a spot behind the inclosure of the garden of the Bravées, at an angle of the wall, half concealed with holly and ivy, and covered with nettles, wild mallow, and large white mullen growing between the blocks of stone, that he passed the greater part of that summer. He watched there, lost in deep thought. The lizards grew accustomed to his presence, and basked in the sun among the same stones. The summer was bright and full of dreamy indolence: overhead the light clouds came and went. Gilliatt sat upon the grass. The air was full of the songs of birds. He held his two hands up to his forehead, sometimes, trying to recollect himself:

"Why should she write my name in the snow?" From a distance the sea breeze came up in gentle breaths, at intervals the horn of the quarrymen sounded abruptly, warning the passers-by to take shelter, as they shattered some mass with gunpowder. The port of St. Sampson was not visible from this place, but he could see the tips of masts above the trees. The sea-gulls flew wide and afar. Gilliatt had heard his mother say that women could love men; that such things happened sometimes. He remembered it; and said within himself, "Who knows, may not Déruchette love me?" Then a feeling of sadness would come upon him; he would say, "She, too, thinks of me in her turn. It is well." He remembered that Déruchette was rich, and that he was poor: and then the new boat appeared to him an execrable invention. He could never remember what day of the month it was. He would stare listlessly at the great bees, with their yellow bodies and their short wings, as they entered with a buzzing noise into the holes in the wall.

One evening Déruchette went in-doors to retire to bed. She approached her window to close it. The night was dark. Suddenly, something caught her ear, and she listened. Somewhere in the darkness there was a sound of music. It was some one, perhaps, on the hill-side, or at the foot of the towers of Vale Castle, or, perhaps, further still, playing an air upon some instrument. Déruchette recognized her favorite melody, "Bonnie Dundee," played upon the bagpipe. She thought little of it.

From that night the music might be heard again from time to time at the same hours, particularly when the nights were very dark.

Déruchette was not much pleased with all this.

IV.

"A serenade by night may please a lady fair,
But of uncle and of guardian let the troubadour
beware."
—*Unpublished Comedy*

FOUR YEARS passed away.

Déruchette was approaching her twenty-

first year, and was still unmarried. Some writer has said that a fixed idea is a sort of gimlet; every year gives it another turn. To pull it out the first year is like plucking out the hair by the roots; in the second year, like tearing the skin; in the third, like breaking the bones; and in the fourth, like removing the very brain itself.

Gilliatt had arrived at this fourth stage.

He had never yet spoken a word to Déruchette. He lived and dreamed near that delightful vision. This was all.

It happened one day that, finding himself by chance at St. Sampson, he had seen Déruchette talking with Mess Lethierry at the door of the Bravées, which opens upon the roadway of the port. Gilliatt ventured to approach very near. He fancied that at the very moment of his passing she had smiled. There was nothing impossible in that.

Déruchette still heard, from time to time, the sound of the bagpipe.

Mess Lethierry had also heard this bagpipe. By degrees he had come to remark this persevering musician under Déruchette's window. A tender strain, too; all the more suspicious. A nocturnal gallant was a thing not to his taste. His wish was to marry Déruchette in his own time, when she was willing and he was willing, purely and simply, without any romance, or music, or anything of that sort. Irritated at it, he had at last kept a watch, and he fancied that he had detected Gilliatt. He passed his fingers through his beard—a sign of anger—and grumbled out, "What has that fellow got to pipe about? He is in love with Déruchette, that is clear. You waste your time, young man. Any one who wants Déruchette must come to me, and not loiter about playing the flute."

An event of importance, long foreseen, occurred soon afterwards. It was announced that the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode was appointed surrogate of the Bishop of Winchester, dean of the island, and rector of St. Peter's Port, and that he would leave St. Sampson for St. Peter's immediately after his successor should be installed.

It could not be long to the arrival of the new rector. He was a gentleman of Norman extraction, Monsieur Ebenezer Caudray.

Some facts were known about the new rector, which the benevolent and malevolent interpreted in a contrary sense. He was known to be young and poor, but his youth was tempered with much learning, and his poverty by good expectations. In the dialect specially invented for the subject of riches and inheritances, death goes by the name of "expectations." He was the nephew and heir of the aged and opulent dean of St. Asaph. At the death of this old gentleman he would be a rich man. M. Caudray had distinguished relations. He was almost entitled to the quality of "Honorable." As regarded his doctrine, people judged differently. He was an Anglican, but, according to the expression of Bishop Tillotson, a "libertine"—that is, in reality, one who was very severe. He repudiated all pharisaism. He was a friend rather of the Presbytery than the Episcopacy. He dreamed of the Primitive Church of the days when even Adam had the right to choose his Eve, and when Frumentinus, Bishop of Hierapolis, carried off a young maiden to make her his wife, and said to her parents, "Her will is such, and such is mine. You are no longer her mother, and you are no longer her father. I am the Bishop of Hierapolis, and this is my wife. Her father is in heaven." If the common belief could be trusted, M. Caudray subordinated the text, "Honor thy father and thy mother," to that other text, in his eyes of higher significance, "The woman is the flesh of the man. She shall leave her father and mother to follow her husband." This tendency, however, to circumscribe the parental authority and to favor religiously every mode of forming the conjugal tie, is peculiar to all Protestantism, particularly in England, and singularly so in America.

V.

A DESERVED SUCCESS HAS ALWAYS ITS
DETRACTORS.

AT this period the affairs of Mess Lethierry were in this position:—The *Durande* had well fulfilled all his expectations. He had paid his debts, repaired his misfortunes, discharged his obligations at Brême, met his acceptances at St. Malo. He had paid off the mortgage upon his house at the Bravées, and had bought up all the little local rent-charges upon the property. He was also the proprietor of a great productive capital. This was the *Durande* herself. The net revenue from the boat was about a thousand pounds sterling per annum, and the traffic was constantly increasing. Strictly speaking, the *Durande* constituted his entire fortune. She was also the fortune of the island. The carriage of cattle being one of the most profitable portions of her trade, he had been obliged, in order to facilitate the stowage, and the embarking and disembarking of animals, to do away with the luggage-boxes and the two boats. It was, perhaps, imprudent. The *Durande* had but one boat—namely her long-boat; but this was an excellent one.

Ten years had elapsed since Rantaine's robbery.

This prosperity of the *Durande* had its weak point. It inspired no confidence. People regarded it as a risk. Lethierry's good fortune was looked upon as exceptional. He was considered to have gained by a lucky rashness. Some one in the Isle of Wight who had imitated him had not succeeded. The enterprise had ruined the shareholders. The engines, in fact, were badly constructed. But people shook their heads. Innovations have always to contend with the difficulty, that few wish them well. The least false step compromises them.

One of the commercial oracles of the Channel Islands, a certain banker from Paris, named Jauge, being consulted upon a steamboat speculation, was reported to have turned his back, with the remark, "An investment is it you propose to me? Exactly; an investment in smoke."

On the other hand, the sailing-vessels

had no difficulty in finding capitalists to take shares in a venture. Capital, in fact, was obstinately in favor of sails, and as obstinately against boilers and paddle-wheels. At Guernsey, the *Durande* was indeed a fact, but steam was not yet an established principle. Such is the fanatical spirit of conservatism in opposition to progress. They said of Lethierry, "It is all very well; but he could not do it a second time." Far from encouraging, his example inspired timidity. Nobody would have dared to risk another *Durande*.

VI.

THE SLOOP CASHMERE SAVES A SHIP-
WRECKED CREW.

THE equinoctial gales begin early in the Channel. The sea there is narrow, and the winds disturb it easily. The westerly gales begin from the month of February, and the waves are beaten about from every quarter. Navigation becomes an anxious matter. The people on the coasts look to the signal-post, and begin to watch for vessels in distress. The sea is then like a cut-throat in ambush for his victim. An invisible trumpet sounds the alarm of war with the elements, furious blasts spring up from the horizon, and a terrible wind soon begins to blow. The dark night whistles and howls. In the depth of the clouds the black tempest distends its cheeks, and the storm arises.

The wind is one danger; the fogs are another.

Fogs have from all time been the terror of mariners. In certain fogs microscopic prisms of ice are found in suspension, to which Mariotte attributes halos, mock suns, and paraselenes. Storm-fogs are of a composite character; various gases of unequal specific gravity combine with the vapor of water, and arrange themselves layer over layer, in an order which divides the dense mist into zones. Below ranges the iodine; above the iodine is the sulphur; above the sulphur the brome; above the brome the phosphorous. This, in a certain manner, and making allowance for electric and magnetic tension, explains several phenomena, as the St. Elmo's Fire of Colum-

bus and Magellan, the flying stars moving about the ships, of which Seneca speaks; the two flames, Castor and Pollux, mentioned by Plutarch; the Roman legion, whose spears appeared to Cæsar to take fire; the peak of the Chateau of Duino in Friuli, which the sentinel made to sparkle by touching it with his lance; and perhaps even those fulgurations from the earth which the ancients called Satan's terrestrial lightnings. At the equator, an immense mist seems permanently to encircle the globe. It is known as the cloud-ring. The function of the cloud-ring is to temper the heat of the tropics, as that of the Gulf-stream is to mitigate the coldness of the Pole.

Under the cloud-ring fogs are fatal. These are what are called *horse latitudes*. It was here that navigators of bygone ages were accustomed to cast their horses into the sea to lighten the ship in stormy weather, and to economize the fresh water when becalmed. Columbus said, "*Nube abaxo ex muerte*," death lurks in the low cloud. The Etruscans, who bear the same relation to meteorology which the Chaldeans did to astronomy, had two high priests—the high priest of the thunder, and the high priest of the clouds. The "fulgurators" observed the lightning, and the weather sages watched the mists. The college of Priest-Augurs was consulted by the Syrians, the Phœnicians, the Pelasgi, and all the primitive navigators of the ancient *Mare Internum*. The origin of tempests was, from that time forward, partially understood. It is intimately connected with the generation of fogs, and is, properly speaking, the same phenomenon. There exist upon the ocean three regions of fogs, one equatorial and two polar. The mariners give them but one name, the *pitch-pot*.

In all latitudes, and particularly in the Channel, the equinoctial fogs are dangerous. They shed a sudden darkness over the sea. One of the perils of fogs, even when not very dense, arises from their preventing the mariners perceiving the change of the bed of the sea by the variations of the color of the water. The result is a dangerous concealment of the

approach of sands and breakers. The vessel steers towards the shoals without receiving any warning. Frequently the fogs leave a ship no resource except to lie-to, or to cast anchor. There are as many shipwrecks from the fogs as from the winds.

After a very violent squall succeeding one of these foggy days, the mail-boat Cashmere arrived safely from England. It entered at St. Peter's Port as the first gleam of day appeared upon the sea, and at the very moment when the cannon of Castle Cornet announced the break of day. The sky had cleared: the sloop Cashmere was anxiously expected, as she was to bring the new rector of St. Sampson.

A little after the arrival of the sloop, a rumor ran through the town that she had been hailed during the night at sea by a long-boat containing a shipwrecked crew.

VII.

HOW AN IDLER HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE
TO BE SEEN BY A FISHERMAN.

On that very night, at the moment when the wind abated, Gilliatt had gone out with his nets, without, however, taking his famous old Dutch boat too far from the coast.

As he was returning with the rising tide, towards two o'clock in the afternoon, the sun was shining brightly, and he passed before the Beast's Horn to reach the little bay of the Bû de la Rue. At that moment he fancied that he saw, in the projection of the "Gild-Holm-'Ur" seat a shadow, which was not that of the rock. He steered his vessel nearer, and was able to perceive a man sitting in the "Gild-Holm-'Ur." The sea was already very high, the rock encircled by the waves, and escape entirely cut off. Gilliatt made signs to the man. The stranger remained motionless. Gilliatt drew nearer; the man was asleep.

He was attired in black. "He looks like a priest," thought Gilliatt. He approached still nearer, and could distinguish the face of a young man.

The features were unknown to him.

The rock, happily, was peaked; there was a good depth. Gilliatt wore off, and

succeeded in skirting the rocky wall. The tide raised the bark so high that Gilliatt, by standing upon the gunwale of the sloop, could touch the man's feet. He raised himself upon the planking, and stretched out his hands. If he had fallen at that moment, it is doubtful if he would have risen again on the water; the waves were rolling in between the boat and the rock, and destruction would have been inevitable. He pulled the foot of the sleeping man. "Ho! there. What are you doing in this place?"

The man aroused, and muttered—

"I was looking about."

He was now completely awake, and continued—

"I have just arrived in this part. I came this way on a pleasure trip. I have passed the night on the sea: the view from here seemed beautiful. I was weary, and fell asleep."

"Ten minutes later, and you would have been drowned."

"Ha!"

"Jump into my bark."

Gilliatt kept the bark fast with his foot, clutched the rock with one hand, and stretched out the other to the stranger in black, who sprang quickly into the boat. He was a fine young man.

Gilliatt seized the tiller, and in two minutes his boat entered the bay of the *Bû de la Rue*.

The young man wore a round hat and a white cravat; and his long black frock-coat was buttoned up to the neck. He had fair hair, which he wore *en couronne*. He had a somewhat feminine cast of features, a clear eye, a grave manner.

Meanwhile the boat had touched the ground. Gilliatt passed the cable through the mooring-ring, then turned and perceived the young man holding out a sovereign in a very white hand.

Gilliatt moved the hand gently away.

There was a pause. The young man was the first to break the silence.

"You have saved me from death."

"Perhaps," replied Gilliatt.

The moorings were made fast, and they went ashore.

The stranger continued—

"I owe you my life, sir."

"No matter."

This reply from Gilliatt was again followed by a pause.

"Do you belong to this parish?"

"No," replied Gilliatt.

"To what parish, then?"

Gilliatt lifted up his right hand, pointed to the sky, and said—

"To that yonder."

The young man bowed, and left him.

After walking a few paces, the stranger stopped, felt in his pocket, drew out a book, and returning towards Gilliatt offered it to him.

"Permit me to make you a present of this."

Gilliatt took the volume.

It was a Bible.

An instant after, Gilliatt, leaning upon the parapet, was following the young man with his eyes as he turned the angle of the path which led to *St. Sampson*.

By little and little he lowered his gaze, forgot all about the stranger—knew no more whether the "*Gild-Holm-'Ur*" existed. Everything disappeared before him in the bottomless depth of a reverie.

There was one abyss which swallowed up all his thoughts. This was *Déruchette*.

A voice calling him, aroused him from this dream.

"Ho there, Gilliatt!"

He recognized the voice and looked up.

"What is the matter, *Sieur Landoys*?"

It was, in fact, *Sieur Landoys*, who was passing along the road about one hundred paces from the *Bû de la Rue* in his phaeton, drawn by one little horse. He had stopped to hail Gilliatt, but he seemed hurried.

"There is news, Gilliatt."

"Where is that?"

"At the *Bravées*."

"What is it?"

"I am too far off to tell you the story."

Gilliatt shuddered.

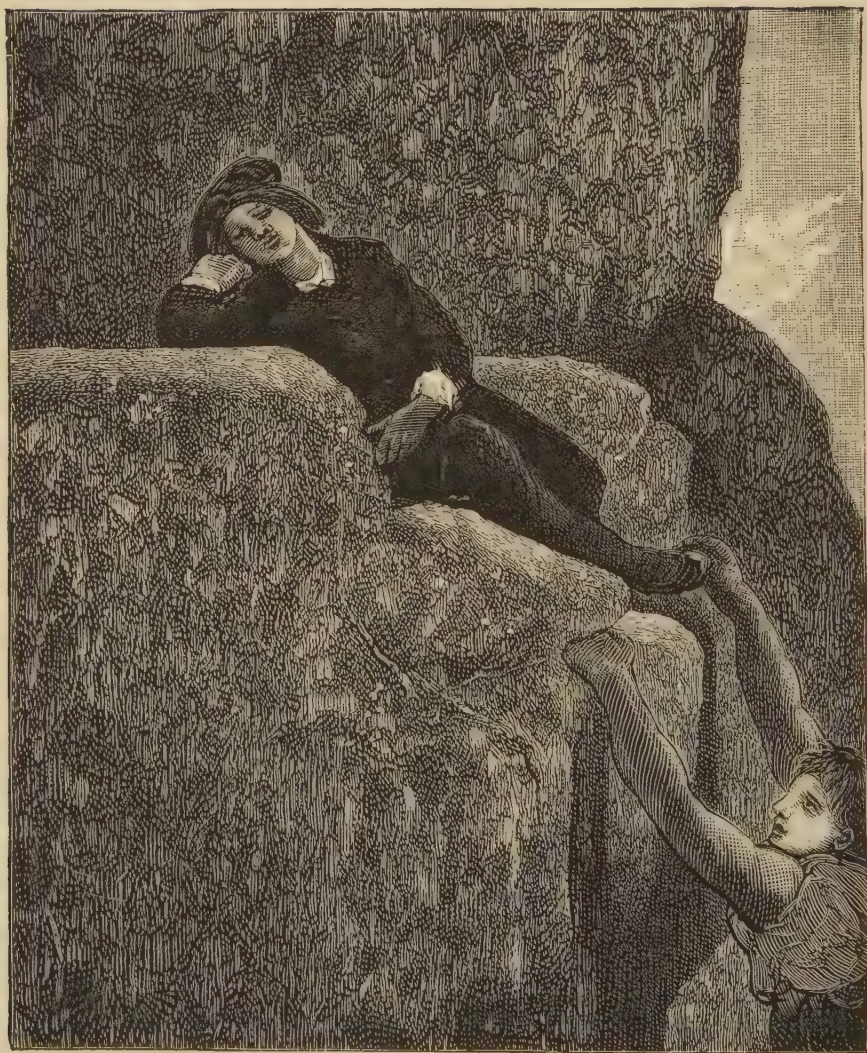
"Is Miss *Déruchette* going to be married?"

"No; but she had better look out for a husband."

"What do you mean?"

"Go up to the house, and you will learn."

And *Sieur Landoys* whipped on his horse.



HE PULLED THE FOOT OF THE SLEEPING MAN.

BOOK V.

THE REVOLVER.

I.

CONVERSATIONS AT THE JEAN AUBERGE.

SIEUR CLUBIN was a man who bided his time. He was short in stature, and his complexion was yellow. He had the strength of a bull. His sea life had not tanned his skin; his flesh had a sallow hue; it was the color of a wax candle, of which his eyes, too, had something of the steady light. His memory was peculiarly retentive. With him, to have seen a man once, was to have him like a note in a note-book. His quiet glance took possession of you. The pupil of his eye received the impression of a face, and kept it like a portrait. The face might grow old, but *Sieur Clubin* never lost it; it was impossible to cheat that tenacious memory. *Sieur Clubin* was curt in speech, grave in manner, bold in action. No gestures were ever indulged in by him. An air of candor won everybody to him at first; many people thought him artless. He had a wrinkle in the corner of his eye, astonishingly expressive of simplicity. As we have said, no abler mariner existed; no one like him for reefing a sail, for keeping a vessel's head to the wind, or the sails well set. Never did reputation for religion and integrity stand higher than his. To have suspected him would have been to bring yourself under suspicion. He was on terms of intimacy with *Monsieur Rébuchet*, a money-changer at *St. Malo*, who lived in the *Rue St. Vincent*, next door to the armorer's; and *Monsieur Rébuchet* would say, "I would leave my shop in *Clubin's* hands."

Sieur Clubin was a widower; his wife, like himself, had enjoyed a high reputation for probity. She had died with a fame for incorruptible virtue. If the bailli had whispered gallant things in her ear, she would have impeached him before the king. If a saint had made love to her, she would have told it to the priest. This couple, *Sieur* and *Dame Clubin*, had realized in

Torteval the ideal of the English epithet "respectable." *Dame Clubin's* reputation was as the snowy whiteness of the swan; *Sieur Clubin's* like that of ermine itself—a spot would have been fatal to him. He could hardly have picked up a pin without making inquiries for the owner. He would send round the town-crier about a box of matches. One day he went into a wine-shop at *St. Servan*, and said to the man who kept it, "Three years ago I breakfasted here; you made a mistake in the bill;" and he returned the man thirteen sous. He was the very personification of probity, with a certain compression of the lips indicative of watchfulness.

He seemed, indeed, always on the watch—for what? For rogues, probably.

Every Tuesday he commanded the *Durande* on her passage from *Guernsey* to *St. Malo*. He arrived at *St. Malo* on the Tuesday evening, stayed two days there to discharge and take in a new cargo, and started again for *Guernsey* on Friday morning.

There was at that period, at *St. Malo*, a little tavern near the harbor, which was called the "*Jean Auberge*."

The construction of the modern quays swept away this house. At this period, the sea came up as far as the *St. Vincent* and *Dinan* gates. *St. Merlan* and *St. Servan* communicated with each other by covered carts and other vehicles, which passed to and fro among vessels lying high and dry, avoiding the buoys, the anchors, and cables, and running the risk now and then of smashing their leathern hoods against lowered yards, or the end of a jib-boom. Between the tides, the coachmen drove their horses over those sands, where, six hours afterwards, the winds would be beating the rolling waves. The four-and-twenty carrying dogs of *St. Malo*, who tore to pieces a naval officer in 1770, were accustomed to prowl about this beach. This excessive zeal on their part led to the destruction of the pack. Their nocturnal barkings are no longer heard between the little and the great *Talard*.

Sieur Clubin was accustomed to stay at the *Jean Auberge*. The French office of the *Durande* was held there.

The custom-house officers and coast-guardmen came to take their meals and to drink at the Jean Auberge. They had their separate tables. The custom-house officers of Binic found it convenient for the service to meet there with their brother officers of St. Malo.

Captains of vessels came there also ; but they ate at another table.

Sieur Clubin sat sometimes at one, sometimes at the other table, but preferred the table of the custom-house men to that of the sea captains. He was always welcome at either.

The tables were well served. There were strange drinks specially provided for foreign sailors. A dandy sailor from Bilboa could have been supplied there with a *helada*. People drank stout there, as at Greenwich ; or brown *gueuse*, as at Antwerp.

Masters of vessels who came from long voyages and privateersmen sometimes appeared at the captains' table, where they exchanged news. "How are sugars? That commission is only for small lots.—The brown kinds, however, are going off. Three thousand bags of East India, and five hundred hogsheds of Sagua.—Take my word, the opposition will end by defeating Villèle.—What about indigo? Only seven serons of Guatemala changed hands.—The 'Nanine-Julia' is in the roads; a pretty three-master from Brittany.—The two cities of La Plata are at loggerheads again.—When Monte Video gets fat, Buenos Ayres grows lean.—It has been found necessary to transfer the cargo of the 'Regina-Cœli,' which has been condemned at Callao.—Cocoas go off briskly.—Caraque bags are quoted at one hundred and thirty-four, and Trinidad's at seventy-three.—It appears that at the review in the Champ de Mars, the people cried, 'Down with the ministers!'—The raw salt Saladeros hides are selling—oxhides at sixty francs, and cows' at forty-eight.—Have they passed the Balkan?—What is Diebitsch about?—Aniseed is in demand at San Francisco. Plagniol olive oil is quiet.—Gruyère cheese, in bulk, is thirty-two francs the quintal.—Well, is Leon XII. dead?" etc. etc.

All these things were talked about and commented on aloud. At the table of the custom-house and coast-guard officers they spoke in a lower key.

Matters of police and revenue on the coast and in the ports require, in fact, a little more privacy, and a little less clearness in the conversation.

The sea-captains' table was presided over by an old captain of a large vessel, M. Gertrais-Gaboureaux. M. Gertrais-Gaboureaux could hardly be regarded as a man; he was rather a living barometer. His long life at sea had given him a surprising power of prognosticating the state of the weather. He seemed to issue a decree for the weather to-morrow. He sounded the winds, and felt the pulse, as it were, of the tides. He might be imagined requesting the clouds to show their tongue—that is to say, their forked lightnings. He was the physician of the wave, the breeze, and the squall. The ocean was his patient. He had travelled round the world like a doctor going his visits, examining every kind of climate in its good and bad condition. He was profoundly versed in the pathology of the seasons. Sometimes he would be heard delivering himself in this fashion—"The barometer descended in 1796 to three degrees below tempest point." He was a sailor from real love of the sea. He hated England as much as he liked the ocean. He had carefully studied English seamanship, and considered himself to have discovered its weak point. He would explain how the "Sovereign" of 1637 differed from the "Royal William" of 1670, and from the "Victory" of 1775. He compared their build as to their forecastles and quarter-decks. He looked back with regret to the towers upon the deck, and the funnel-shaped tops of the "Great Harry" of 1514—probably regarding them from the point of view of convenient lodging-places for French cannon balls. In his eyes, nations only existed for their naval institutions. He indulged in some odd figures of speech on this subject. He considered the term "The Trinity House," as sufficiently indicating England. The "Northern Commissioners" were in like manner synonymous in his mind with

Scotland; the "Ballast Board" with Ireland. He was full of nautical information. He was, in himself, a marine alphabet and almanac, a tariff and low-water mark, all combined. He knew by heart all the light-house dues—particularly those of the English coast—one penny per ton for passing before this; one farthing before that. He would tell you that the Small Rock Light which once used to burn two hundred gallons of oil, now consumes fifteen hundred. Once, aboard ship, he was attacked by a dangerous disease, and was believed to be dying. The crew assembled round his hammock, and in the midst of his groans and agony, he addressed the chief carpenter with the words, "You had better make a mortise in each side of the main caps, and put in a bit of iron to help pass the top ropes through." His habit of command had given to his countenance an expression of authority.

It was rare that the subjects of conversation at the captains' table and at that of the custom-house men were the same. This, however, did happen to be the case in the first days of that month of February, to which the course of this history has now brought us. The three-master "Tamaulipas," Captain Zuela, arrived from Chili, and bound thither again, was the theme of discussion at both tables.

At the captains' table they were talking of her cargo; and at that of the custom-house people, of certain circumstances connected with her recent proceedings.

Captain Zuela, of Copiapo, was partly a Chilian and partly a Columbian. He had taken a part in the war of Independence in a true independent fashion, adhering sometimes to Bolivar, sometimes to Morillo, according as he had found it to his interest. He had enriched himself by serving all causes. No man in the world could have been more Bourbonist, more Bonapartist, more absolutist, more liberal, more atheistical, or more devoutly catholic. He belonged to that great and renowned party which may be called the Lucrative party. From time to time he made his appearance in France on commercial voyages; and if report spoke truly, he willingly gave a passage to fugitives of any kind—bank-

rupts or political refugees, it was all the same to him, provided they could pay. His mode of taking them aboard was simple. The fugitive waited upon a lonely point of the coast, and at the moment of setting sail, Zuela would detach a small boat to fetch him. On his last voyage he had assisted in this way an outlaw and fugitive from justice, named Berton; and on this occasion he was suspected of being about to aid the flight of the men implicated in the affair of the Bidassoa. The police were informed, and had their eye upon him.

This period was an epoch of flights and escapes. The Restoration in France was a reactionary movement. Revolutions are fruitful of voluntary exile; and restorations of wholesale banishments. During the first seven or eight years which followed the return of the Bourbons, panic was universal—in finance, in industry, in commerce, men felt the ground tremble beneath them. Bankruptcies were numerous in the commercial world; in the political, there was a general rush to escape. Lavalette had taken flight, Lefebvre Desnouettes had taken flight, Delon had taken flight. Special tribunals were again in fashion—*plus* Treetaillon. People instinctively shunned the Pont de Saumur, the esplanade de la Réole, the wall of the Observatoire in Paris, the tower of Taurias d'Avignon—dismal landmarks in history where the period of reaction has left its sign-spots, on which the marks of that blood-stained hand are still visible. In London the Thistlewood affair, with its ramifications in France: in Paris the Trogoff trial, with its ramifications in Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy, had increased the motives for anxiety and flight, and given an impetus to that mysterious rout which left so many gaps in the social system of that day. To find a place of safety, this was the general care. To be implicated was to be ruined. The spirit of the military tribunals had survived their institution. Sentences were matters of favor. People fled to Texas, to the Rocky Mountains, to Peru, to Mexico. The men of the Loire, traitors then, but now regarded as patriots, had founded

the *Champ d'Asile*. Béranger in one of his songs says—

"Barbarians! we are Frenchmen born;
Pity us, glorious, yet forlorn."

Self-banishment was the only resource left. Nothing perhaps seems simpler than flight, but that monosyllable has a terrible significance. Every obstacle is in the way of the man who slips away. Taking to flight necessitates disguise. Persons of importance—even illustrious characters—were reduced to these expedients, only fit for malefactors. Their independent habits rendered it difficult for them to escape through the meshes of authority. A rogue who violates the condition of his ticket-of-leave comports himself before the police as innocently as a saint; but imagine innocence constrained to act a part; virtue disguising its voice; a glorious reputation hiding under a mask. Yonder passer-by is a man of well-earned celebrity; he is in quest of a false passport. The equivocal proceedings of one absconding from the reach of the law is no proof that he is not a hero. Ephemeral but characteristic features of the time of which our so-called regular history takes no note, but which the true painter of the age will bring out into relief. Under cover of these flights and concealments of honest men, genuine rogues, less watched and suspected, managed often to get clear off. A scoundrel, who found it convenient to disappear, would take advantage of the general pell-mell, tack himself on to the political refugees, and, thanks to his greater skill in the art, would contrive to appear in that dim twilight more honest even than his honest neighbors. Nothing looks more awkward and confused sometimes than honesty unjustly condemned. It is out of its element, and is almost sure to commit itself.

It is a curious fact, that this voluntary expatriation, particularly with honest folks, appeared to lead to every strange turn of fortune. The modicum of civilization which a scamp brought with him from London or Paris became, perhaps, a valuable stock in trade in some primitive country, ingratiated him with the people, and enabled him to strike into new paths.

There is nothing impossible in a man's escaping thus from the laws, to reappear elsewhere as a dignitary among the priesthood. There was something phantasmagorical in these sudden disappearances; and more than one such flight has led to events like the marvels of a dream. An escapade of this kind, indeed, seemed to end naturally in the wild and wonderful; as when some broken bankrupt suddenly decamps to turn up again twenty years later as Grand Vizier to the Mogul, or as a king in Tasmania.

Rendering assistance to these fugitives was an established trade, and, looking to the abundance of business of that kind, was a highly profitable one. It was generally carried on as a supplementary branch of certain recognized kinds of commerce. A person, for instance, desiring to escape to England, applied to the smugglers; one who desired to get to America, had recourse to sea-captains like Zuela.

II.

CLUBIN OBSERVES SOME ONE.

ZUELA came sometimes to take refreshment at the Jean Auberge. Clubin knew him by sight.

For that matter Clubin was not proud. He did not disdain even to know scamps by sight. He went so far sometimes as to cultivate even a closer acquaintance with them; giving his hand in the open street, or saying good-day to them. He talked English with the smugglers, and jabbered Spanish with the *contrebandistas*. On this subject he had at command a number of apologetic phrases. "Good," he said, "can be extracted out of the knowledge of evil. The game-keeper may find advantage in knowing the poacher. The good pilot may sound the depths of a pirate, who is only a sort of hidden rock. I test the quality of a scoundrel as a doctor will test a poison." There was no answering a battery of proverbs like this. Everybody gave Clubin credit for his shrewdness. People praised him for not indulging in a ridiculous delicacy. Who, then, should dare to speak scandal of him on this point?

Everything he did was evidently "for the good of the service." With him, all was straightforward. Nothing could stain his good fame. Crystal might more easily become sullied. This general confidence in him was the natural reward of a long life of integrity, the crowning advantage of a settled reputation. Whatever Clubin might do, or appear to do, was sure to be interpreted favorably. He had attained almost to a state of impeccability. Over and above this, "he is very wary," people said: and from a situation which in others would have given rise to suspicion, his integrity would extricate itself, with a still greater halo of reputation for ability. This reputation for ability mingled harmoniously with his fame for perfect simplicity of character. Great simplicity and great talents in conjunction are not uncommon. The compound constitutes one of the varieties of the virtuous man, and one of the most valuable. *Sieur Clubin* was one of those men who might be found in intimate conversation with a sharper or a thief, without suffering any diminution of respect in the minds of their neighbors.

The *Tamaulipas* had completed her loading. She was ready for sea, and was preparing to sail very shortly.

One Tuesday evening the *Durande* arrived at *St. Malo* while it was still broad daylight. *Sieur Clubin*, standing upon the bridge of the vessel, and superintending the manœuvres necessary for getting her into port, perceived upon the sandy beach, near the *Petit-Bey*, two men, who were conversing between the rocks, in a solitary spot. He observed them with his sea-glass, and recognized one of the men. It was *Captain Zuela*. He seemed to recognize the other also.

This other was a person of high stature, a little gray. He wore the broad-brimmed hat and the sober clothing of the Society of Friends. He was probably a Quaker. He lowered his gaze with an air of extreme diffidence.

On arriving at the *Jean Auberge*, *Sieur Clubin* learnt that the *Tamaulipas* was preparing to sail in about ten days.

It has since become known that he obtained information on some other points.

That night he entered the gunsmith's shop in the *St. Vincent Street*, and said to the master:

"Do you know what a revolver is?"

"Yes," replied the gunsmith. "It is an American weapon."

"It is a pistol with which a man can carry on a conversation."

"Exactly: an instrument which comprises in itself both the question and the answer."

"And the rejoinder too."

"Precisely, *Monsieur Clubin*. A rotatory clump of barrels."

"I shall want five or six balls."

The gunmaker twisted the corner of his lip, and made that peculiar noise with which, when accompanied by a toss of the head, Frenchmen express admiration.

"The weapon is a good one, *Monsieur Clubin*."

"I want a revolver with six barrels."

"I have not one."

"What! and you a gunmaker!"

"I do not keep such articles yet. You see, it is a new thing. It is only just coming into vogue. French makers, as yet, confine themselves to the simple pistol."

"Nonsense."

"It has not yet become an article of commerce."

"Nonsense, I say."

"I have excellent pistols."

"I want a revolver."

"I agree that it is more useful. Stop, *Monsieur Clubin*!"

"What?"

"I believe I know where there is one at this moment in *St. Malo*; to be had a bargain."

"A revolver!"

"Yes."

"For sale?"

"Yes."

"Where is that?"

"I believe I know; or I can find out."

"When can you give me an answer?"

"A bargain; but of good quality."

"When shall I return?"

"If I procure you a revolver, remember, it will be a good one."

"When will you give me an answer?"

"After your next voyage."

"Do not mention that it is for me," said Clubin.

III.

CLUBIN CARRIES AWAY SOMETHING AND BRINGS BACK NOTHING.

SIEUR CLUBIN completed the loading of the *Durande*, embarked a number of cattle and some passengers, and left St. Malo for Guernsey, as usual, on the Friday morning.

On that same Friday, when the vessel had gained the open, which permits the captain to absent himself a moment from the place of command, Clubin entered his cabin, shut himself in, took a travelling bag which he kept there, put into one of its compartments some biscuit, some boxes of preserves, a few pounds of chocolate in sticks, a chronometer, and a sea telescope, and passed through the handles a cord, ready prepared to sling it if necessary. Then he descended into the hold, went into the compartment where the cables are kept, and was seen to come up again with one of those knotted ropes heavy with pieces of metal, which are used for ship caulkers at sea and by robbers ashore. Cords of this kind are useful in climbing.

Having arrived at Guernsey, Clubin repaired to Torteval. He took with him the travelling bag and the knotted cord, but did not bring them back again.

Let us repeat once for all, the Guernsey which we are describing is that ancient Guernsey which no longer exists, and of which it would be impossible to find a parallel now anywhere except in the country. There it is still flourishing, but in the towns it has passed away. The same remarks apply to Jersey. St. Helier's is as civilized as Dieppe, St. Peter's Port as L'Orient. Thanks to the progress of civilization, thanks to the admirably enterprising spirit of that brave island people, everything has been changed during the last forty years in the Norman Archipelago. Where there was darkness there is now light. With these premises let us proceed.

At that period, then, which is already so far removed from us as to have become

historical, smuggling was carried on very extensively in the Channel. The smuggling vessels abounded particularly on the western coast of Guernsey. People of that peculiarly clever kind who know, even in the smallest details, what went on half a century ago, will even cite you the names of these suspicious craft, which were almost always Austrians or Guiposeans. It is certain that a week scarcely ever passed without one or two being seen either in Saint's Bay or at Pleinmont: their coming and going had almost the character of a regular service. A cavern in the cliffs at Sark was called then, and is still called, the "Shops" ("Les Boutiques") from its being the place where the smugglers made their bargains with the purchasers of their merchandise. This sort of traffic had in the Channel a dialect of its own, a vocabulary of contraband technicalities now forgotten, and which was to the Spanish what the "Levantine" is to the Italian.

On many parts of the English coast smuggling had a secret but cordial understanding with legitimate and open commerce. It had access to the house of more than one great financier, by the backstairs it is true; and its influence extended itself mysteriously through all the commercial world, and the intricate ramifications of manufacturing industry. Merchant on one side, smuggler on the other; such was the key to the secret of many great fortunes. Séguin affirmed it of Bourgain, Bourgain of Séguin. We do not vouch for their accusations; it is possible that they were calumniating each other. However this may have been, it is certain that the contraband trade, though hunted down by the law, was flourishing enough in certain financial circles. It had relations with "the very best society." Thus the brigand Mandrin, in other days, found himself occasionally tête-à-tête with the Count of Charolais; for this underground trade often contrived to put on a very respectable appearance; kept a house of its own with an irreproachable exterior.

All this necessitated a host of manoeuvres and connivances, which required impenetrable secrecy. A contrabandist was

entrusted with a good many things, and knew how to keep them secret. An inviolable confidence was the condition of his existence. The first quality, in fact, in a smuggler was strict honor in his own circle. No discreetness, no smuggling. Fraud has its secrets like the priest's confessional.

These secrets were indeed, as a rule, faithfully kept. The contrabandist swore to betray nothing, and he kept his word; nobody was more trustworthy than the genuine smuggler. The Judge Alcade of Oyarzun captured a smuggler one day, and put him to torture to compel him to disclose the name of the capitalist who secretly supported him. The smuggler refused to tell. The capitalist in question was the Judge Alcade himself. Of these two accomplices, the judge and the smuggler, the one had been compelled, in order to appear in the eyes of the world to fulfil the law, to put the other to the torture; which the other had patiently borne for the sake of his oath.

The two most famous smugglers who haunted Pleinmont at that period were Blasco and Blasquito. They were *Tocayos*. This was a sort of Spanish or Catholic relationship which consisted in having the same patron saint in heaven; a thing, it will be admitted, not less worthy of consideration than having the same father upon earth.

When a person was initiated into the furtive ways of the contraband business, nothing was more easy, or from a certain point of view more troublesome. It was sufficient to have no fear of dark nights, to repair to Pleinmont, and to consult the oracle located there.

IV.

PLEINMONT.

PLEINMONT, near Torteval, is one of the three corners of the island of Guernsey. At the extremity of the cape there arises a high turfy hill, which looks over the sea.

The height is a lonely place. All the more lonely from there being one solitary house there.

This house adds a sense of terror to that of solitude.

It is popularly believed to be haunted.

Haunted or not, its aspect is singular.

Built of granite, and rising only one story high, it stands in the midst of the grassy solitude. It is in a perfectly good condition as far as exterior is concerned; the walls are thick and the roof is sound. Not a stone is wanting in the sides, not a tile upon the roof. A brick-built chimney-stack forms the angle of the roof. The building turns its back to the sea, being on that side merely a blank wall. On examining this wall, however, attentively, the visitor perceives a little window bricked up. The two gables have three dormer windows, one fronting the east, the others fronting the west, but both are bricked up in like manner. The front, which looks inland, has alone a door and windows. This door, too, is walled in, as are also the two windows of the ground-floor. On the first floor—and this is the feature which is most striking as you approach—there are two open windows; but these are even more suspicious than the blind windows. Their open squares look dark even in broad day, for they have no panes of glass, or even window-frames. They open simply upon the dusk within. They strike the imagination like hollow eye-sockets in a human face. Inside all is deserted. Through the gaping casements you may mark the ruin within. No panellings, no woodwork; all bare stone. It is like a windowed sepulchre, giving liberty to the spectres to look out upon the daylight world. The rains sap the foundations on the seaward side. A few nettles, shaken by the breeze, flourish in the lower part of the walls. Far around the horizon there is no other human habitation. The house is a void; the abode of silence: but if you place your ear against the wall and listen, you may distinguish a confused noise now and then, like the flutter of wings. Over the walled door, upon the stone which forms its architrave, are sculptured these letters “ELM-PBILG,” with the date “1780.”

The dark shadow of night and the mournful light of the moon, find entrance there.

The sea completely surrounds the house. Its situation is magnificent; but for that reason its aspect is more sinister. The

beauty of the spot becomes a puzzle. Why does not a human family take up its abode here? The place is beautiful, the house well-built. Whence this neglect? To these questions, obvious to the reason, succeed others, suggested by the reverie which the place inspires. Why is this cultivatable garden uncultivated? No master for it; and the bricked-up doorway? What has happened to the place? Why is it shunned by men? What business is done here? If none, why is there no one here? Is it only when all the rest of the world are asleep that some one in this spot is awake? Dark squalls, wild winds, birds of prey, strange creatures, unknown forms, present themselves to the mind, and connect themselves somehow with this deserted house. For what class of wayfarers can this be the hostelry? You imagine to yourself whirlwinds of rain and hail beating in at the open casements, and wandering through the rooms. Tempests have left their vague traces upon the interior walls. The chambers, though walled and covered in, are visited by the hurricanes. Has the house been the scene of some great crime? You may almost fancy that this spectral dwelling, given up to solitude and darkness, might be heard calling aloud for succor. Does it remain silent? Do voices indeed issue from it? What business has it on hand in this lonely place? The mystery of the dark hours rests securely here. Its aspect is disquieting at noon-day; what must it be at midnight? The dreamer asks himself—for dreams have their coherence—what this house may be between the dusk of evening and the twilight of approaching dawn? Has the vast supernatural world some relation with this deserted height, which sometimes compels it to arrest its movements here, and to descend and to become visible? Do the scattered elements of the spirit world whirl around it? Does the impalpable take form and substance here? Insoluble riddles! A holy awe is in the very stones; that dim twilight has surely relations with the infinite Unknown. When the sun has gone down, the song of the birds will be hushed, the goatherd behind the hills will go homeward with his goats; reptiles,

taking courage from the gathering darkness, will creep through the fissures of rocks; the stars will begin to appear, night will come, but yonder two blank casements will still be staring at the sky. They open to welcome spirits and apparitions; for it is by the names of apparitions, ghosts, phantom faces vaguely distinct, masks in the lurid light, mysterious movements of minds, and shadows, that the popular faith, at once ignorant and profound, translates the sombre relations of this dwelling with the world of darkness.

The house is "haunted;" the popular phrase comprises everything.

Credulous minds have their explanation; common-sense thinkers have theirs also. "Nothing is more simple," say the latter, "than the history of the house. It is an old observatory of the time of the revolutionary wars and the days of smuggling. It was built for such objects. The wars being ended, the house was abandoned; but it was not pulled down, as it might one day again become useful. The door and windows have been walled to prevent people entering, or doing injury to the interior. The walls of the windows, on the three sides which face the sea, have been bricked up against the winds of the south and south-west. That is all."

The ignorant and the credulous, however, are not satisfied. In the first place, the house was not built at the period of the wars of the Revolution. It bears the date "1780," which was anterior to the Revolution. In the next place it was not built for an observatory. It bears the letters, "ELM-PBILG," which are the double monogram of two families, and which indicate, according to usage, that the house was built for the use of a newly-married couple. Then it has certainly been inhabited; why then should it be abandoned? If the door and windows were bricked up to prevent people entering the house only, why were two windows left open? Why are there no shutters, no window-frames, no glass? Why were the walls bricked in on one side if not on the other? The wind is prevented from entering from the south; but why is it allowed to enter from the north?

The credulous are wrong, no doubt; but it is clear that the common-sense thinkers have not discovered the key to the mystery. The problem remains still unsolved.

It is certain that the house is generally believed to have been more useful than inconvenient to the smugglers.

The growth of superstitious terror tends to deprive facts of their true proportions. Without doubt, many of the nocturnal phenomena which have, by little and little, secured to the building the reputation of being haunted, might be explained by obscure and furtive visits, by brief sojourns of sailors near the spot, and sometimes by the precaution, sometimes by the daring, of men engaged in certain suspicious occupations concealing themselves for their dark purposes, or allowing themselves to be seen in order to inspire dread.

At this period, already a remote one, many daring deeds were possible. The police—particularly in small places—was by no means as efficient as in these days.

Add to this, that if the house was really, as was said, a resort of the smugglers, their meetings there must, up to a certain point, have been safe from interruption precisely because the house was dreaded by the superstitious people of the country. Its ghostly reputation prevented its being visited for other reasons. People do not generally apply to the police, or officers of customs, on the subject of spectres. The superstitious rely on making the sign of the cross; not on magistrates and indictments. There is always a tacit connivance, involuntary it may be, but not the less real, between the objects which inspire fear and their victims. The terror-stricken feel a sort of culpability in having encountered their terrors; they imagine themselves to have unveiled a secret; and they have an inward fear, unknown even to themselves, of aggravating their guilt, and exciting the anger of the apparitions. All this makes them discreet. And over and above this reason, the very instinct of the credulous is silence; dread is akin to dumbness; the terrified speak little; horror seems always to whisper, "Hush!"

It must be remembered that this was a period when the Guernsey peasants be-

lieved that the Mystery of the Holy Manger is repeated by oxen and asses every year on a fixed day; a period when no one would have dared to enter a stable at night for fear of coming upon the animals on their knees.

If the local legends and stories of the people can be credited, the popular superstition went so far as to fasten to the walls of the house at Pleinmont, things of which the traces are still visible—rats without feet, bats without wings, and bodies of other dead animals. Here, too, were seen toads crushed between the pages of a Bible, bunches of yellow lupins, and other strange offerings, placed there by imprudent passers-by at night, who, having fancied that they had seen something, hoped by these small sacrifices to obtain pardon, and to appease the ill-humors of were-wolves and evil spirits. In all times, believers of this kind have flourished; some even in very high places. Cæsar consulted Saganus, and Napoleon Mademoiselle Lenormand. There are a kind of consciences so tender, that they must seek indulgences even from Beelzebub. "May God do, and Satan not undo," was one of the prayers of Charles the Fifth. They come to persuade themselves that they may commit sins even against the Evil One; and one of their cherished objects was, to be irreproachable even in the eyes of Satan. We find here an explanation of those adorations sometimes paid to infernal spirits. It is only one more species of fanaticism. Sins against the devil certainly exist in certain morbid imaginations. The fancy that they have violated the laws of the lower regions torments certain eccentric casuists; they are haunted with scruples even about offending the demons. A belief in the efficacy of devotions to the spirits of the Brocken or Armuyr, a notion of having committed sins against hell, visionary penances for imaginary crimes, avowals of the truth to the spirit of falsehood, self-accusation before the origin of all evil, and confessions in an inverted sense—are all realities, or things at least which have existed. The annals of criminal procedure against witchcraft and magic prove this in every page. Human folly unhappily extends

even thus far; when terror seizes upon a man he does not stop easily. He dreams of imaginary faults, imaginary purifications, and clears out his conscience with the old witches' broom.

Be this as it may, if the house at Pleinmont had its secrets, it kept them to itself; except by some rare chance, no one went there to see. It was left entirely alone. Few people, indeed, like to run the risk of an encounter with the other world.

Owing to the terror which it inspired, and which kept at a distance all who could observe or bear testimony on the subject, it had always been easy to obtain an entrance there at night by means of a rope ladder, or even by the use of the first ladder coming to hand in one of the neighboring fields. A consignment of goods or provisions left there, might await in perfect safety the time and opportunity for a furtive embarkation. Tradition relates that forty years ago a fugitive—for political offences as some affirm, for commercial as others say—remained for some time concealed in the haunted house at Pleinmont; whence he finally succeeded in embarking in a fishing-boat for England. From England a passage is easily obtained to America.

Tradition also avers that provisions deposited in this house remain there untouched, Lucifer and the smugglers having an interest in inducing whoever places them there to return.

From the summit of this house, there is a view to the south of the Hanway Rocks, at about a mile from the shore.

These rocks are famous. They have been guilty of all the evil deeds of which rocks are capable. They are the most ruthless destroyers of the sea. They lie in a treacherous ambush for vessels in the night. They have contributed to the enlargement of the cemeteries at Torteval and Rocquaine.

A lighthouse was erected on these rocks in 1862. At the present day, the Hanways light the way for the vessels which they once lured to destruction; the destroyer in ambush now bears a lighted torch in his hand; and mariners seek in the horizon, as a protector and a guide, the rock which

they used to fly as a pitiless enemy. It gives confidence by night in that vast space where it was so long a terror—like a robber converted into a gendarme.

There are three Hanways: the Great Hanway, the Little Hanway, and the Mauve. It is upon the Little Hanway that the red light is placed at the present time.

This reef of rocks forms part of a group of peaks, some beneath the sea, some rising out of it. It towers above them all; like a fortress, it has advanced works: on the side of the open sea, a chain of thirteen rocks; on the north, two breakers—the High Fourquiés, the Needles, and a sand-bank called the Héroutée. On the south, three rocks—the Cat Rock, the Percée, and the Herpin Rock; then two banks—the South Bank and the Muet: besides which, there is, on the side opposite Pleinmont, the Tas de Pois d'Aval.

To swim across the channel from the Hanways to Pleinmont is difficult, but not impossible. We have already said that this was one of the achievements of Clubin. The expert swimmer who knows this channel can find two resting places, the Round Rock, and further on, a little out of the course, to the left, the Red Rock.

V.

THE BIRDS'-NESTERS.

It was near the period of that Saturday which was passed by Sieur Clubin at Torteval that a curious incident occurred, which was little heard of at the time, and which did not generally transpire till a long time afterwards. For many things, as we have already observed, remain undivulged, simply by reason of the terror which they have caused in those who have witnessed them.

In the night-time between Saturday and Sunday—we are exact in the matter of the date, and we believe it to be correct—three boys climbed up the hill at Pleinmont. The boys returned to the village: they came from the seashore. They were what are called, in the corrupt French of that part, "*déniquoiseaux*," or birds'-

nesters. Wherever there are cliffs and cleft rocks overhanging the sea, the young birds'-nesters abound. The reader will remember that Gilliatt interfered in this matter for the sake of the birds as well as for the sake of the children.

The "*déniquoiseaux*" are a sort of sea-urchins, and are not a very timid species.

The night was very dark. Dense masses of cloud obscured the zenith. Three o'clock had sounded in the steeple of Torteval, which is round and pointed like a magician's hat.

Why did the boys return so late? Nothing more simple. They had been searching for sea-gulls' nests in the Tas de Pois d'Aval. The season having been very mild, the pairing of the birds had begun very early. The children watching the fluttering of the male and female about their nests, and excited by the pursuit, had forgotten the time. The waters had crept up around them; they had no time to regain the little bay in which they had moored their boat, and were compelled to wait upon one of the peaks of the Tas de Pois for the ebb of the tide. Hence their late return. Mothers wait on such occasions in feverish anxiety for the return of their children, and when they find them safe, give vent to their joy in the shape of anger, and relieve their tears by dealing them a sound drubbing. The boys accordingly hastened their steps, but in fear and trembling. Their haste was of that sort which is glad of an excuse for stopping, and which is not inconsistent with a reluctance to reach their destination; for they had before them the prospect of warm embraces, to be followed with an inevitable thrashing.

One only of the boys had nothing of this to fear. He was an orphan: a French boy, without father or mother, and perfectly content just then with his motherless condition; for nobody taking any interest in him, his back was safe from the dreaded blows. The two others were natives of Guernsey, and belonged to the parish of Torteval.

Having climbed the grassy hill, the three birds'-nesters reached the tableland on which was situate the haunted house.

They began by being in fear, which is the proper frame of mind of every passer-by; and particularly of every child at that hour and in that place.

They had a strong desire to take to their heels as fast as possible, and a strong desire, also, to stay and look.

They did stop.

They looked towards the solitary building.

It was all dark and terrible.

It stood in the midst of the solitary plain—an obscure block, a hideous but symmetrical excrescence; a high square mass with right-angled corners, like an immense altar in the darkness.

The first thought of the boys was to run; the second was to draw nearer. They had never seen this house before. There is such a thing as a desire to be frightened arising from curiosity. They had a little French boy with them, which emboldened them to approach.

It is well known that the French have no fear.

Besides, it is reassuring to have company in danger; to be frightened in the company of two others is encouraging.

And then they were a sort of hunters accustomed to peril. They were children; they were used to search, to rummage, to spy out hidden things. They were in the habit of peeping into holes; why not into this hole? Hunting is exciting. Looking into birds' nests perhaps gives an itch for looking a little into a nest of ghosts. A rummage in the dark regions. Why not?

From prey to prey, says the proverb, we come to the devil. After the birds, the demons. The boys were on the way to learn the secret of those terrors of which their parents had told them. To be on the track of hobgoblin tales—nothing could be more attractive. To have long stories to tell like the good housewives. The notion was tempting.

All this mixture of ideas, in their state of half-confusion, half-instinct, in the minds of the Guernsey birds'-nesters, finally screwed their courage to the point. They approached the house.

The little fellow who served them as a sort of moral support in the adventure was

certainly worthy of their confidence. He was a bold boy—an apprentice to a ship-caulker; one of those children who have already become men. He slept on a little straw in a shed in the ship-caulker's yard, getting his own living, having red hair, and a loud voice; climbing easily up walls and trees, not encumbered with prejudices in the matter of property in the apples within his reach; a lad who had worked in the repairing dock for vessels of war—a child of chance, a happy orphan, born in France, no one knew exactly where; ready to give a centime to a beggar; a mischievous fellow, but a good one at heart; one who had talked to Parisians. At this time he was earning a shilling a day by caulking the fishermen's boats under repair at the Pêqueries. When he felt inclined he gave himself a holiday, and went birds'-nesting. Such was the little French boy.

The solitude of the place impressed them with a strange feeling of dread. They felt the threatening aspect of the silent house. It was wild and savage. The naked and deserted plateau terminated in a precipice at a short distance from its steep incline. The sea below was quiet. There was no wind. Not a blade of grass stirred.

The birds'-nesters advanced by slow steps, the French boy at their head, and looking towards the house.

One of them, afterwards relating the story, or as much of it as had remained in his head, added, "It did not speak."

They came nearer, holding their breath, as one might approach a savage animal.

They had climbed the hill at the side of the house which descended to seaward towards a little isthmus of rocks almost inaccessible. Thus they had come pretty near to the building; but they saw only the southern side, which was all walled up. They did not dare to approach by the other side, where the terrible windows were. They grew bolder, however; the caulker's apprentice whispered, "Let's veer to larboard. That's the handsome side. Let's have a look at the black windows."

The little band accordingly "veered to larboard," and came round to the other side of the house.

The two windows were lighted up.

The boys took to their heels.

When they had got to some distance, the French boy, however, returned.

"Hillo!" said he, "the lights have vanished."

The light at the windows had, indeed, disappeared. The outline of the building was seen as sharply defined as if stamped out with a punch against the livid sky.

Their fear was not abated, but their curiosity had increased. The birds'-nesters approached.

Suddenly, the light reappeared at both windows at the same moment.

The two young urchins from Torteval took to their heels and vanished. The daring French boy did not advance, but he kept his ground.

He remained motionless, confronting the house and watching it.

The light disappeared and appeared again once more. Nothing could be more horrible. The reflection made a vague streak of light upon the grass, wet with the night dew. All of a moment the light cast upon the walls of the house two huge dark profiles, and the shadows of enormous heads.

The house, however, being without ceilings, and having nothing left but its four walls and roof, one window could not be lighted without the other.

Perceiving that the caulker's apprentice kept his ground, the other birds'-nesters returned, step by step, and one after the other, trembling and curious. The caulker's apprentice whispered to them, "There are ghosts in the house. I have seen the nose of one." The two Torteval boys got behind their companion, standing tiptoe against his shoulder; and thus sheltered, and taking him for their shield, felt bolder and watched also.

The house on its part seemed also to be watching them. There it stood in the midst of that vast darkness and silence, with its two glaring eyes. These were its upper windows. The light vanished, reappeared, and vanished again, in the fashion of these unearthly illuminations. These sinister intermissions had, probably, some connection with the opening and shutting of the infernal regions. The air-

hole of a sepulchre has thus been seen to produce effects like those from a dark lantern.

Suddenly a dark form, like that of a human being, ascended to one of the windows, as if from without, and plunged into the interior of the house.

To enter by the window is the custom with spirits.

The light was for a moment more brilliant, then went out, and appeared no more. The house became dark. The noises resembled voices. This is always the case. When there was anything to be seen it is silent. When all became invisible again, noises were heard.

There is a silence peculiar to night-time at sea. The repose of darkness is deeper on the water than on the land. When there is neither wind nor wave in that wild expanse, over which, in ordinary time, even the flight of eagles makes no sound, the movement of a fly could be heard. This sepulchral quiet gave a dismal relief to the noises which issued from the house.

"Let us look," said the French boy.

And he made a step towards the house.

The others were so frightened that they resolved to follow him. They did not dare even to run away alone.

Just as they had passed a heap of fagots, which for some mysterious reason seemed to inspire them with a little courage in that solitude, a white owl flew towards them from a bush. The owls have a suspicious sort of flight, a sidelong skim which is suggestive of mischief afloat. The bird passed near the boys, fixing upon them its round eyes, bright amidst the darkness.

A shudder ran through the group behind the French boy.

He looked up at the owl and said :

"Too late, my bird ; *I will* look."

And he advanced.

The crackling sound made by his thick nailed boots among the furze bushes, did not prevent his hearing the noise in the house, which rose and fell with the continuousness and the calm accent of a dialogue.

A moment afterwards the boy added :

"Besides it is only fools who believe in spirits."

Insolence in the face of danger rallies the cowardly, and inspires them to go on.

The two Torteval lads resumed their march, quickening their steps behind the caulker's apprentice.

The haunted house seemed to them to grow larger before their eyes. This optical illusion of fear is founded in reality. The house did indeed grow larger, for they were coming nearer to it.

Meanwhile the voices in the house took a tone more and more distinct. The children listened. The ear, too, has its power of exaggerating. It was different to a murmur, more than a whispering, less than an upooar. Now and then one or two words, clearly articulated, could be caught. These words, impossible to be understood, sounded strangely. The boys stopped and listened ; then went forward again.

"It's the ghosts talking," said the caulker's apprentice ; "but I don't believe in ghosts."

The Torteval boys were sorely tempted to shrink behind the heap of fagots, but they had already left it far behind ; and their friend the caulker continued to advance towards the house. They trembled at remaining with him ; but they dared not leave him.

Step by step, and perplexed, they followed. The caulker's apprentice turned towards them and said—

"You know it isn't true. There are no such things."

The house grew taller and taller. The voices became more and more distinct.

They drew nearer.

And now they could perceive within the house something like a muffled light. It was a faint glimmer, like one of those effects produced by dark lanterns, already referred to, and which are common at the midnight meetings of witches.

When they were close to the house they halted.

One of the two Torteval boys ventured on an observation :

"It isn't spirits : it is ladies dressed in white."

"What's that hanging from the window ?" asked the other.

"It looks like a rope."

"It's a snake."

"It is only a hangman's rope," said the French boy, authoritatively. "That's what they use. Only I don't believe in them."

And in three bounds, rather than steps, he found himself against the wall of the building.

The two others, trembling, imitated him, and came pressing against him, one on his right side, the other on his left. The boys applied their ears to the wall. The sounds continued.

The following was the conversation of the phantoms:—

"Así, entendido esta?"

"Entendido."

"Dicho?"

"Dicho."

"Aquí esperara un hombre, y podrá marcharse en Inglaterra con Blasquito."

"Pagando?"

"Pagando."

"Blasquito tomara al hombre en su barca."

"Sin buscar para conocer a su país?"

"No nos toca."

"Ni a su nombre del hombre?"

"No se pide el nombre, pero se pesa la bolsa."

"Bien: esperara el hombre en esa casa."

"So that is understood?"

"Perfectly."

"As is arranged?"

"As is arranged."

"A man will wait here, and can accompany Blasquito to England."

"Paying the expense?"

"Paying the expense."

"Blasquito will take the man in his bark."

"Without seeking to know what country he belongs to?"

"That is no business of ours."

"Without asking his name?"

"We do not ask for names; we only feel the weight of the purse."

"Good: the man shall wait in this house."

"Tenga que comer."

"Tendra."

"Onde?"

"En este saco que he llevado."

"Muy bien."

"Puedo dexar el saco aquí?"

"Los contrabandistas no son ladrones."

"Y vosotros, cuando marchais?"

"Mañana por la mañana. Si su hombre de usted parado podría venir con nosotros."

"Parado no esta."

"Hacienda suya."

"Cuantos días esperara allí?"

"Dos, tres, quatro días; menos o mas."

"Es cierto que el Blasquito vendra?"

"Cierto."

"En est Plainmont."

"En est Plainmont."

"A qual semana?"

"La que viene."

"A qual día?"

"Viernes, o sabado, o domingo."

"No puede faltar?"

"Es mi tocayo."

"Por qualquiera tiempo viene?"

"He must have provisions."

"He will be furnished with them."

"How?"

"From this bag which I have brought."

"Very good."

"Can I leave this bag here?"

"Smugglers are not robbers."

"And when do you go?"

"To-morrow morning. If your man was ready he could come with us."

"He is not prepared."

"That is his affair."

"How many days will he have to wait in this house?"

"Two, three, or four days; more or less."

"Is it certain that Blasquito will come?"

"Certain."

"Here to Plainmont?"

"To Plainmont."

"When?"

"Next week."

"What day?"

"Friday, Saturday, or Sunday."

"May he not fail?"

"He is my Tocayo."

"Will he come in any weather?"

"Qualquiera. No tieme. Soy el Blasco, es el Blasquito."

"Asi, no puede faltar de venir en Guernesey?"

"Vengo a un mes, y viene al otro mes."

"Entiendo."

"A contar del otro sabado, desde hoy en ocho, no se pasaran cinco dias sin que venga el Blasquito."

"Pero un muy malo mar?"

"Egurraldia gaiztoa."

"Si."

"No vendria el Blasquito tan pronto, pero vendria."

"Donde vendra?"

"De Vilvao."

"Onde ira?"

"En Portland."

"Bien."

"O en Tor Bay."

"Mejor."

"Su humbre de usted puede estarse quieto."

"No traidor sera, el Blasquito?"

"Los cobardes son traidores. Somos valientes. El mar es la iglesia del invierno. La traicion es la iglesia del infierno."

"At any time. He has no fear. My name is Blasco, his Blasquito."

"So he cannot fail to come to Guernsey."

"I come one month—he the other."

"I understand."

"Counting from Saturday last, one week from to-day, five days cannot elapse without bringing Blasquito."

"But if there is much sea?"

"Bad weather?"

"Yes."

"Blasquito will not come so quickly, but he will come."

"Whence will he come?"

"From Bilbao."

"Where will he be going?"

"To Portland."

"Good."

"Or to Torbay."

"Better still."

"Your man may rest easy."

"Blasquito will betray nothing?"

"Cowards are the only traitors. We are men of courage. The sea is the church of winter. Treason is the church of hell."

"No se entiende a lo que decimos?"

"Escuchar a nosotros y mirar a nosotros es imposible. La espanta hace allí el desierto."

"Lo sè."

"Quien se atravesaria a escuchar?"

"Es verdad."

"Y escucharian que no entiendrian. Hablamos a una lengua fiera y nuestra que no se conoce. Despues que la sabeis, eries con nosotros."

"Soy viendo para componer las haciendas con ustedes."

"Bueno."

"Y allora me voy."

"Mucho."

"Digame usted, hombre. Si el pasajero quiere que el Blasquito le lleven en una u otra parte que Portland o Tor Bay?"

"Tenga onces."

"El Blasquito hara lo que querra el hombre?"

"El Blasquito hace lo que quieren las onces."

"No one hears what we say?"

"It is impossible to be seen or overheard. The people's fear of this spot makes it deserted."

"I know it."

"Who is there who would dare to listen here?"

"True."

"Besides, if they listened, none would understand. We speak a wild language of our own, which nobody knows hereabouts. As you know it, you are one of us."

"I came only to make these arrangements with you."

"Very good."

"I must now take my leave."

"Be it so."

"Tell me; suppose the passenger should wish Blasquito to take him anywhere else than to Portland or Torbay?"

"Let him bring some gold coins."

"Will Blasquito consult the stranger's convenience?"

"Blasquito will do whatever the gold coins command."

"Es menester mucho tiempo para ir en Tor Bay?"

"Como quiere el viento."

"Ocho horas?"

"Menos, o mas."

"El Blasquito obedecera al pasagero?"

"Si le obedece el mar al Blasquito."

"Bien pagado sera."

"El oro es el oro. El viento es el viento."

"Mucho."

"El hombre hace lo que puede con el oro. Dios con el viento hace lo que quiere."

"Aqui sera viernes el que desea marcharse con Blasquito."

"Pues."

"A qual momento llega Blasquito."

"A la noche. A la noche se llega, a la noche se marcha. Tenemos una muger quien se llama el mar, y una quien se llama la noche."

"La muger puede faltar, la hermana no."

"Todo dicho esta. Abour, hombres."

"Buenas tardes. Un golpe de aguardiente?"

"Gracias."

"Does it take long to go to Torbay?"

"That is as it pleases the winds."

"Eight hours?"

"More or less."

"Will Blasquito obey the passenger?"

"If the sea will obey Blasquito."

"He will be well rewarded."

"Gold is gold; and the sea is the sea."

"That is true."

"Man with his gold does what he can. Heaven with its winds does what it will."

"The man who is to accompany Blasquito will be here on Friday."

"Good."

"At what hour will Blasquito appear?"

"In the night. We arrive by night; and sail by night. We have a wife who is called the sea, and a sister called night. The wife betrays sometimes; but the sister never."

"All is settled, then. Good-night, my men."

"Good night. A drop of brandy first?"

"Thank you."

"Es mejor que xarope."

"Tengo vuestra palabra."

"Mi nombre es Pundonor."

"Sea usted con Dios."

"Ereis gentleman, y soy caballero."

"That is better than a syrup."

"I have your word."

"My name is Point-of-Honor."

"Adieu."

"You are a gentleman: I am a caballero."

It was clear that only devils could talk in this way. The children did not listen long. This time they took to flight in earnest; the French boy, convinced at last, running even quicker than the others.

On the Tuesday following this Saturday, Sieur Clubin returned to St. Malo, bringing back the Durande.

The Tamaulipas was still at anchor in the roads.

Sieur Clubin, between the whiffs of his pipe, said to the landlord of the Jean Auberge:

"Well; and when does the Tamaulipas get under way?"

"The day after to-morrow—Thursday," replied the landlord.

On that evening, Clubin supped at the coast-guard officers' table; and, contrary to his habit, went out after his supper. The consequence of his absence was, that he could not attend to the office of the Durande, and thus lost a little in the matter of freights. This fact was remarked in a man ordinarily punctual.

It appeared that he had chatted a few moments with his friend the money-changer.

He returned two hours after Noguette had sounded the Curfew bell. The Brazilian bell sounds at ten o'clock. It was therefore midnight.

VI.

THE JACRESSADE.

FORTY YEARS ago, St. Malo possessed an alley known by the name of the "Ruelle Coutanchez." This alley no longer exists,

having been removed for the improvements of the town.

It was a double row of houses, leaning one towards the other, and leaving between them just room enough for a narrow rivulet, which was called the street. By stretching the legs, it was possible to walk on both sides of the little stream, touching with head or elbows, as you went, the houses either on the right or the left. These old relics of mediæval Normandy have almost a human interest. Tumble-down houses and sorcerers always go together. Their leaning stories, their overhanging walls, their bowed pent-houses, and their old thick-set irons, seem like lips, chin, nose, and eyebrows. The garret window is the blind eye. The walls are the wrinkled and blotchy cheeks. The opposite houses lay their foreheads together as if they were plotting some malicious deed. All those words of ancient villany—like cut-throat, “slit-weazand,” and the like—are closely connected with architecture of this kind.

One of these houses in the alley—the largest and the most famous, or notorious—was known by the name of the Jacressade.

The Jacressade was a lodging-house for people who do not lodge. In all towns, and particularly in sea-ports, there is always found beneath the lowest stratum of society a sort of residuum: vagabonds who are more than a match for justice; rovers after adventures; chemists of the swindling order, who are always dropping their lives into the melting-pot; people in rags of every shape, and in every style of wearing them; withered fruits of roguery; bankrupt existences; consciences that have filed their schedule; men who have failed in the house-breaking trade (for the great masters of burglary move in a higher sphere); workmen and workwomen in the trade of wickedness; oddities, male and female; men in coats out at elbows; scoundrels reduced to indigence; rogues who have missed the wages of roguery; men who have been hit in the social duel; harpies who have no longer any prey; petty larceners; *gueux* in the double and unhappy meaning of that word. Such

are the constituents of that living mass. Human nature is here reduced to something bestial. It is the refuse of the social state, heaped up in an obscure corner, where from time to time descends that dreaded broom which is known by the name of police. In St. Malo, the Jacressade was the name of this corner.

It is not in dens of this sort that we find the high-class criminals—the robbers, forgers, and other great products of ignorance and poverty. If murder is represented here, it is generally in the person of some coarse drunkard; in the matter of robbery, the company rarely rise higher than the mere sharper. The vagrant is there; but not the highwayman. It would not, however, be safe to trust this distinction. This last stage of vagabondage may have its extremes of scoundrelism. It was on an occasion, when casting their nets into the Epi-scié—which was in Paris what the Jacressade was in St. Malo—that the police captured the notorious Lacenaire.

These lurking-places refuse nobody. To fall in the social scale has a tendency to bring men to one level. Sometimes honesty in tatters found itself there. Virtue and probity have been known before now to be brought to strange passes. We must not judge always by appearances, even in the palace or at the galleys. Public respect, as well as universal reprobation, requires testing. Surprising results sometimes spring from this principle. An angel may be discovered in the stews; a pearl in the dunghill. Such sad and dazzling discoveries are not altogether unknown.

The Jacressade was rather a courtyard than a house; and more of a well than a courtyard. It had no stories looking on the street. Its façade was simply a high wall, with a low gateway. You raised the latch, pushed the gate, and were at once in the courtyard.

In the midst of this yard might be perceived a round hole, encircled with a margin of stones, and even with the ground. The yard was small, the well large. A broken pavement surrounded it.

The courtyard was square, and built on three sides only. On the side of the street was only the wall; facing you as you

entered the gateway stood the house, the two wings of which formed the sides to right and left.

Anyone entering there after nightfall, at his own risk and peril, would have heard a confused murmur of voices; and, if there had been moonlight or starlight enough to give shape to the obscure forms before his eyes, this is what he would have seen.

The courtyard: the well. Around the courtyard, in front of the gate, a lean-to or shed, in a sort of horse-shoe form, but with square corners; a rotten gallery, with a roof of joists supported by stone pillars at unequal distances. In the centre, the well; around the well, upon a litter of straw, a kind of circular chaplet, formed of the soles of boots and shoes; some trodden down at heel, some showing the toes of the wearers, some the naked heels. The feet of men, women, and children, all asleep.

Beyond these feet, the eye might have distinguished, in the shadow of the shed, bodies, drooping heads, forms stretched out lazily, bundles of rags of both sexes, a promiscuous assemblage, a strange and revolting mass of life. The accommodation of this sleeping chamber was open to all, at the rate of two sous a week. On a stormy night the rain fell upon the feet, the whirling snow settled on the bodies of those wretched sleepers.

Who were these people? The unknown. They came there at night and departed in the morning. Creatures of this kind form part of the social fabric. Some stole in during the darkness and paid nothing. The greater part had scarcely eaten during the day. All kinds of vice and baseness, every sort of moral infection, every species of distress were there. The same sleep settled down upon all in this bed of filth. The dreams of all these companions in misery went on side by side. A dismal meeting-place, where misery and weakness, half-sobered debauchery, weariness from long walking to and fro, with evil thoughts, in quest of bread, pallor with closed eyelids, remorse, envy, lay mingled and festering in the same miasma, with faces that had the look of death, and dishevelled hair mixed with the filth and sweepings of the streets. Such was the putrid heap of

life fermenting in this dismal spot. An unlucky turn of the wheel of fortune, a ship arrived on the day before, a discharge from prison, a dark night, or some other chance, had cast them here, to find a miserable shelter. Every day brought some new accumulation of such misery. Let him enter who would, sleep who could, speak who dared; for it was a place of whispers. The new comers hastened to bury themselves in the mass, or tried to seek oblivion in sleep, since there was none in the darkness of the place. They snatched what little of themselves they could from the jaws of death. They closed their eyes in that confusion of horrors which every day renewed. They were the embodiment of misery, thrown off from society, as the scum is from the sea.

It was not everyone who could even get a share of the straw. More than one figure was stretched out naked upon the flags. They lay down worn out with weariness, and awoke paralyzed. The well, without lid or parapet, and thirty feet in depth, gaped open night and day. Rain fell around it, filth accumulated about, and the gutters of the yard ran down and filtered through its sides. The pail for drawing the water stood by the side. Those who were thirsty drank there; some, disgusted with life, drowned themselves in it—slipped from their slumber in the filthy shed into that profounder sleep. In the year 1819, the body of a boy, of fourteen years old, was taken up out of this well.

To be safe in this house, it was necessary to be of the "right sort." The uninitiated were regarded with suspicion.

Did these miserable wretches, then, know each other? No; yet they scented out the genuine guest of the Jacressade.

The mistress of the house was a young and rather pretty woman, wearing a cap trimmed with ribbons. She washed herself now and then with water from the well. She had a wooden leg.

At break of day, the courtyard became empty. Its inmates dispersed.

An old cock and some other fowls were kept in the courtyard, where they raked among the filth of the place all day long.

A long horizontal beam, supported by posts, traversed the yard—a gibbet-shaped erection, not out of keeping with the associations of the place. Sometimes on the morrow of a rainy day, a silk dress, mudded and wet, would be seen hanging out to dry upon this beam. It belonged to the woman with the wooden leg.

Over the shed, and like it, surrounding the yard, was a story, and above this story a loft. A rotten wooden ladder passing through a hole in the roof of the shed, conducted to this story; and up this ladder the woman would climb, sometimes staggering while its crazy rounds creaked beneath her.

The occasional lodgers, whether by the week or the night, slept in the courtyard; the regular inmates lived in the house.

Windows without a pane of glass, door-frames with no door, fireplaces without stoves; such were the chief features of the interior. You might pass from one room to the other, indifferently, by a long square aperture which had been the door, or by a triangular hole between the joists of the partitions. The fallen plaster of the ceiling lay about the floor. It was difficult to say how the old house still stood erect. The high winds indeed shook it. The lodgers ascended as they could by the worn and slippery steps of the ladder. Everything was open to the air. The wintry atmosphere was absorbed into the house, like water into a sponge. The multitude of spiders seemed alone to guarantee the place against falling to pieces immediately. There was no sign of furniture. Two or three paillasses were in the corner, their ticking torn in parts, and showing more dust than straw within. Here and there were a water-pot and an earthen pipkin. A close, disagreeable odor haunted the rooms.

The windows looked out upon the square yard. The scene was like the interior of a scavenger's cart. The things, not to speak of the human beings, which lay rusting, mouldering, and putrifying there, were indescribable. The fragments seemed to fraternize together. Some fell from the walls, others from the living tenants of

the place. The débris were sown with their tatters.

Besides the floating population which bivouacked nightly in the square yard, the Jacressade had three permanent lodgers—a charcoal-man, a rag-picker, and a "gold-maker." The charcoal-man and the rag-picker occupied two of the paillasses of the first story; the "gold-maker," a chemist, lodged in the loft, which was called, no one knew why, the garret. Nobody knew where the woman slept. The "gold-maker" was a poet in a small way. He inhabited a room in the roof, under the tiles—a chamber with a narrow window, and a large stone fireplace forming a gulf, in which the wind howled at will. The garret window having no frame, he had nailed across it a piece of iron sheathing, part of the wreck of a ship. This sheathing left little room for the entrance of light and much for the entrance of cold. The charcoal-man paid rent from time to time in the shape of a sack of charcoal; the rag-picker paid with a bowl of grain for the fowls every week; the "gold-maker" did not pay at all.

Meanwhile the latter consumed the very house itself for fuel. He had pulled down the little wood-work which remained; and every now and then he took from the wall or the roof a lath or some scantling, to heat his crucible. Upon the partition, above the rag-picker's mattress, might have been seen two columns of figures, marked in chalk by the rag-picker himself from week to week—a column of threes, and a column of fives—according as the bowl of grain had cost him three liards, or five centimes. The gold-pot of the "chemist" was an old fragment of a bomb-shell, promoted by him to the dignity of a crucible, in which he mixed his ingredients. The transmutation of metals absorbed all his thoughts. He was determined before he died to revenge himself by breaking the windows of orthodox science with the real philosopher's stone. His furnace consumed a good deal of wood. The hand-rail of the stairs had disappeared. The house was slowly burning away. The landlady said to him, "You will leave us nothing but

the shell." He mollified her by addressing her in verses.

Such was the Jacressade.

A boy of twelve, or, perhaps, sixteen—for he was like a dwarf, with a large wen upon his neck, and always carrying a broom in his hand—was the domestic of the place.

The habitués entered by the gateway of the courtyard; the public entered by the shop.

In the high wall, facing the street, and to the right of the entrance to the courtyard, was a square opening, serving at once as a door and a window. This was the shop. The square opening had a shutter and a frame—the only shutter in all the house which had hinges and bolts. Behind this square aperture, which was open to the street, was a little room, a compartment obtained by curtailing the sleeping shed in the courtyard. Over the door passers-by read the inscription in charcoal, "Curiosities sold here." On three boards, forming the shop-front, were several china pots without ears, a Chinese parasol made of gold-beater's skin, and ornamented with figures, torn here and there, and impossible to open or shut; fragments of iron, and shapeless pieces of old pottery, and dilapidated hats and bonnets: three or four shells, some packets of old bone and metal buttons, a tobacco-box with a portrait of Marie-Antoinette, and a dog's-eared volume of Boisbertrand's Algebra. Such was the stock of the shop; this assortment completed the "curiosities." The shop communicated by a back door with the yard in which was the well. It was furnished with a table and a stool. The woman with a wooden leg presided at the counter.

VII.

NOCTURNAL BUYERS AND MYSTERIOUS SELLERS.

CLUBIN had been absent from the Jean Auberge all the evening of Tuesday. On the Wednesday night he was absent again.

In the dusk of that evening, two strangers penetrated into the mazes of

the ruelle Coutanchez. They stopped in front of the Jacressade. One of them knocked at the window; the door of the shop opened, and they entered. The woman with the wooden leg met them with the smile which she reserved for respectable citizens. There was a candle on the table.

The strangers were, in fact, respectable citizens. The one who had knocked said, "Good day, mistress. I have come for that affair."

The woman with the wooden leg smiled again, and went out by the back door leading to the courtyard, and where the well was. A moment afterwards the back door was opened again, and a man stood in the doorway. He wore a cap and a blouse. It was easy to see the shape of something under his blouse. He had bits of old straw in his clothes, and looked as if he had just been aroused from sleep.

He advanced and exchanged glances with the strangers. The man in the blouse looked puzzled, but cunning; he said—

"You are the gunsmith?"

The one who had tapped at the window replied—

"Yes; you are the man from Paris?"

"Known as Redskin. Yes."

"Show me the thing."

The man took from under his blouse a weapon extremely rare at that period in Europe. It was a revolver.

The weapon was new and bright. The two strangers examined it. The one who seemed to know the house, and whom the man in the blouse had called "the gunsmith," tried the mechanism. He passed the weapon to the other, who appeared less at home there, and kept his back turned to the light.

The gunsmith continued: "How much?"

The man in the blouse replied—

"I have just brought it from America. Some people bring monkeys, parrots, and other animals, as if the French people were savages. For myself I brought this. It is a useful invention."

"How much?" inquired the gunsmith again.

"It is a pistol which turns and turns."

"How much?"

"Bang! the first fire. Bang! the second fire. Bang the third fire. What a hailstorm of bullets! That will do some execution."

"The price?"

"There are six barrels."

"Well, well, what do you want for it?"

"Six barrels; that is six Louis."

"Will you take five?"

"Impossible. One Louis a ball. That is the price."

"Come, let us do business together. Be reasonable."

"I have named a fair price. Examine the weapon, Mr. Gunsmith."

"I have examined it."

"The barrel twists and turns like Talleyrand himself. The weapon ought to be mentioned in the 'Dictionary of Weather-cocks.' It is a gem."

"I have looked at it."

"The barrels are of Spanish make."

"I see they are."

"They are twisted. This is how this twisting is done. They empty into a forge the basket of a collector of old iron. They fill it full of these old scraps, with old nails, and broken horse-shoes swept out of farriers' shops."

"And old sickle-blades."

"I was going to say so, Mr. Gunsmith. They apply to all this rubbish a good sweating heat, and this makes a magnificent material for gun-barrels."

"Yes; but it may have cracks, flaws, or crosses."

"True; but they remedy the crosses by little twists, and avoid the risk of doublings by beating hard. They bring their mass of iron under the great hammer; give it two more good sweating heats. If the iron has been heated too much, they re-temper it with dull heats, and lighter hammers. And then they take out their stuff and roll it well; and with this iron they manufacture you a weapon like this."

"You are in the trade, I suppose?"

"I am of all trades."

"The barrels are pale-colored."

"That's the beauty of them, Mr. Gunsmith. The tint is obtained with anti-mony."

"It is settled, then, that we give you five Louis?"

"Allow me to observe that I had the honor of saying six."

The gunsmith lowered his voice.

"Hark you, master. Take advantage of the opportunity. Get rid of this thing. A weapon of this kind is of no use to a man like you. It will make you remarked."

"It is very true," said the Parisian. "It is rather conspicuous. It is more suited to a gentleman."

"Will you take five Louis?"

"No, six; one for every shot."

"Come, six Napoleons."

"I will have six Louis."

"You are not a Bonapartist, then. You prefer a Louis to a Napoleon."

The Parisian nicknamed "Redskin" smiled.

"A Napoleon is greater," said he, "but a Louis is worth more."

"Six Napoleons."

"Six Louis. It makes a difference to me of four-and-twenty francs."

"The bargain is off in that case."

"Good: I keep the toy."

"Keep it."

"Beating me down! a good idea! It shall never be said that I got rid like that of a wonderful specimen of ingenuity."

"Good night, then."

"It marks a whole stage in the progress of making pistols, which the Chesapeake Indians call Nortay-u-Hah."

"Five Louis, ready money. Why, it is a handful of gold."

"'Nortay-u-Hah,' that signifies 'short gun.' A good many people don't know that."

"Will you take five Louis, and just a bit of silver?"

"I said six, master."

The man who kept his back to the candle, and who had not yet spoken, was spending his time during the dialogue in turning and testing the mechanism of the pistol. He approached the armorer's ear and whispered—

"Is it a good weapon?"

"Excellent."

"I will give the six Louis."

Five minutes afterwards, while the Parisian nicknamed "Redskin" was depositing the six Louis which he had just received in a secret slit under the breast of his blouse, the armorer and his companion, carrying the revolver in his trousers pocket, stepped out into the straggling street.

VIII.

A "CANNON" OFF THE RED BALL AND THE BLACK.

ON the morrow, which was a Thursday, a tragic circumstance occurred at a short distance from St. Malo, near the peak of the "Décollé," a spot where the cliff is high and the sea deep.

A line of rocks in the form of the top of a lance, and connecting themselves with the land by a narrow isthmus, stretch out there into the water, ending abruptly with a large peak-shaped breaker. Nothing is commoner in the architecture of the sea. In attempting to reach the plateau of the peaked rock from the shore, it was necessary to follow an inclined plane, the ascent of which was here and there somewhat steep.

It was upon a plateau of this kind, towards four o'clock in the afternoon, that a man was standing, enveloped in a large military cape, and armed; a fact easy to be perceived from certain straight and angular folds in his mantle. The summit on which this man was resting was a rather extensive platform, dotted with large masses of rock, like enormous paving-stones, leaving between them narrow passages. This platform, on which a kind of thick, short grass grew here and there, came to an end on the sea side in an open space, leading to a perpendicular escarpment. The escarpment, rising about sixty feet above the level of the sea, seemed cut down by the aid of a plumb-line. Its left angle, however, was broken away, and formed one of those natural staircases common to granite cliffs worn by the sea, the steps of which are somewhat inconvenient, requiring sometimes the strides of a giant or the leaps of an acrobat. These stages of rock descended perpendicularly

to the sea, where they were lost. It was a break-neck place. However, in case of absolute necessity, a man might succeed in embarking there, under the very wall of the cliff.

A breeze was sweeping the sea. The man wrapped in his cape and standing firm, with his left hand grasping his right shoulder, closed one eye, and applied the other to a telescope. He seemed absorbed in anxious scrutiny. He had approached the edge of the escarpment, and stood there motionless, his gaze immovably fixed on the horizon. The tide was high; the waves were beating below against the foot of the cliffs.

The object which the stranger was observing was a vessel in the offing, and which was manœuvring in a strange manner. The vessel, which had hardly left the port of St. Malo an hour, had stopped behind the Banquetiers. It had not cast anchor, perhaps because the bottom would only have permitted it to bear to leeward on the edge of the cable, and because the ship would have strained on her anchor under the cutwater. Her captain had contented himself with lying-to.

The stranger, who was a coast-guardman, as was apparent from his uniform cape, watched all the movements of the three-master, and seemed to note them mentally. The vessel was lying-to, a little off the wind, which was indicated by the backing of the small topsail, and the bellying of the maintopsail. She had squared the mizen, and set the topmast as close as possible, and in such a manner as to work the sails against each other, and to make little way either on or off shore. Her captain evidently did not care to expose his vessel much to the wind, for he had only braced up the small mizen topsail. In this way, coming crossway on, he did not drift at the utmost more than half a league an hour.

It was still broad daylight, particularly on the open sea, and on the heights of the cliff. The shores below were becoming dark.

The coast-guardman, still engaged in his duty, and carefully scanning the offing, had not thought of observing the rocks at

his side and at his feet. He turned his back towards the difficult sort of causeway which formed the communication between his resting-place and the shore. He did not, therefore, remark that something was moving in that direction. Behind a fragment of rock, among the steps of that causeway, something like the figure of a man had been concealed, according to all appearances, since the arrival of the coast-guardman. From time to time a head issued from the shadow behind the rock; looked up and watched the watcher. The head, surmounted by a wide-brimmed American hat, was that of the Quaker-looking man, who, ten days before, was talking among the stones of the Petit-Bey to Captain Zuela.

Suddenly, the curiosity of the coast-guardman seemed to be still more strongly awakened. He polished the glass of his telescope quickly with his sleeve, and brought it to bear closely upon the three-master.

A little black spot seemed to detach itself from her side.

The black spot, looking like a small insect upon the water, was a boat.

The boat seemed to be making for the shore. It was manned by several sailors, who were pulling vigorously.

She pulled crosswise by little and little, and appeared to be approaching the *Pointe du Décollé*.

The gaze of the coast-guardman seemed to have reached its most intense point. No movement of the boat escaped it. He had approached nearer still to the verge of the rock.

At that instant a man of large stature appeared on one of the rocks behind him. It was the Quaker. The officer did not see him.

The man paused an instant, his arms at his sides, but with his fists doubled; and with the eye of a hunter, watching for his prey, he observed the back of the officer.

Four steps only separated them. He put one foot forward, then stopped; took a second step, and stopped again. He made no movement except the act of walking; all the rest of his body was motionless as a statue. His foot fell upon the

tufts of grass without noise. He made a third step, and paused again. He was almost within reach of the coast-guard, who stood there still motionless with his telescope. The man brought his two closed fists to a level with his collar bone, then struck out his arms sharply, and his two fists, as if thrown from a sling, struck the coast-guardman on the two shoulders. The shock was decisive. The coast-guardman had not the time to utter a cry. He fell head first from the height of the rock into the sea. His boots appeared in the air about the time occupied by a flash of lightning. It was like the fall of a stone in the sea, which instantly closed over him.

Two or three circles widened out upon the dark water.

Nothing remained but the telescope, which had dropped from the hands of the man, and lay upon the turf.

The Quaker leaned over the edge of the escarpment a moment, watched the circles vanishing on the water, waited a few minutes, and then rose again, singing in a low voice:

"The captain of police is dead,
Through having lost his life."

He knelt down a second time. Nothing reappeared. Only at the spot where the officer had been engulfed, he observed on the surface of the water a sort of dark spot, which became diffused with the gentle lapping of the waves. It seemed probable that the coast-guardman had fractured his skull against some rock under water, and that his blood caused the spot in the foam. The Quaker, while considering the meaning of this spot, began to sing again:

"Not very long before he died,
The luckless man was still alive."

He did not finish his song.

He heard an extremely soft voice behind him, which said: "Is that you, Rantaine? Good day. You have just killed a man!"

He turned. About fifteen paces behind him, in one of the passages between the rocks, stood a little man holding a revolver in his hand.

The Quaker answered:

"As you see. Good day, *Sieur Clubin*."

The little man started.

"You know me?"

"You knew me very well," replied Rantaine.

Meanwhile they could hear a sound of oars on the sea. It was the approach of the boat which the officer had observed.

Sieur Clubin said in a low tone, as if speaking to himself:

"It was done quickly."

"What can I do to oblige you?" asked Rantaine.

"Oh, a trifling matter! It is very nearly ten years since I saw you. You must have been doing well. How are you?"

"Well enough," answered Rantaine. "How are you?"

"Very well," replied Clubin.

Rantaine advanced a step towards Clubin.

A little sharp click caught his ear. It was Sieur Clubin who was cocking his revolver.

"Rantaine, there are about fifteen paces between us. It is a nice distance. Remain where you are."

"Very well," said Rantaine. "What do you want with me?"

"I! Oh, I have come to have a chat with you."

Rantaine did not offer to move again. Sieur Clubin continued:

"You assassinated a coast-guardman just now."

Rantaine lifted the flap of his hat, and replied:

"You have already done me the honor to mention it."

"Exactly; but in terms less precise. I said a man: I say now, a coast-guardman. The man wore the number 619. He was the father of a family; leaves a wife and five children."

"That is no doubt correct," said Rantaine.

There was a momentary pause.

"They are picked men—those coast-guard people," continued Clubin; "almost all old sailors."

"I have remarked," said Rantaine, "that people generally do leave a wife and five children."

Sieur Clubin continued: "Guess how much this revolver cost me?"

"It is a pretty tool," said Rantaine.

"What do you guess it at?"

"I should guess it at a good deal."

"It cost me one hundred and forty-four francs."

"You must have bought that," said Rantaine, "at the shop in the ruelle Coutanchez."

Clubin continued:

"He did not cry out. The fall stopped his voice, no doubt."

"Sieur Clubin, there will be a breeze to-night."

"I am the only one in the secret."

"Do you still stay at the Jean Auberge?"

"Yes: you are not badly served there."

"I remember getting some excellent sour-kROUT there."

"You must be exceedingly strong, Rantaine. What shoulders you have! I should be sorry to get a tap from you. I, on the other hand, when I came into the world, looked so spare and sickly, that they despaired of rearing me."

"They succeeded though; which was lucky."

"Yes: I still stay at the Jean Auberge."

"Do you know, Sieur Clubin, how I recognized you? It was from your having recognized me. I said to myself, there is nobody like Sieur Clubin for that."

And he advanced a step.

"Stand back where you were, Rantaine."

Rantaine fell back, and said to himself:

"A fellow becomes like a child before one of those weapons."

Sieur Clubin continued:

"The position of affairs is this: we have on our right, in the direction of St. Enogat, at about three hundred paces from here, another coast-guardman—his number is 618—who is still alive; and on our left, in the direction of St. Lunaire—a customs station. That makes seven armed men who could be here, if necessary, in five minutes. The rock would be surrounded; the way hither guarded. Impossible to elude them. There is a corpse at the foot of this rock."

Rantaine took a side-way glance at the revolver.

"As you say, Rantaine, it is a pretty tool. Perhaps it is only loaded with powder; but what does that matter? A report would be enough to bring an armed force—and I have six barrels here."

The measured sound of the oars became very distinct. The boat was not far off.

The tall man regarded the little man curiously. *Sieur Clubin* spoke in a voice more and more soft and subdued.

"Rantaine, the men in the boat which is coming, knowing what you did here just now, would lend a hand and help to arrest you. You are to pay Captain *Zuela* ten thousand francs for your passage. You would have made a better bargain, by the way, with the smugglers of *Pleinmont*; but they would only have taken you to *England*; and besides, you cannot risk going to *Guernsey*, where they have the pleasure of knowing you. To return, then, to the position of affairs—if I fire, you are arrested. You are to pay *Zuela* for your passage ten thousand francs. You have already paid him five thousand in advance. *Zuela* would keep the five thousand and be gone. These are the facts. Rantaine, you have managed your masquerading very well. That hat—that queer coat—and those gaiters make a wonderful change. You forgot the spectacles; but did right to let your whiskers grow."

Rantaine smiled spasmodically. *Clubin* continued:

"Rantaine, you have on a pair of American breeches, with a double fob. In one side you keep your watch. Take care of it."

"Thank you, *Sieur Clubin*."

"In the other is a little box, made of wrought iron, which opens and shuts with a spring. It is an old sailor's tobacco-box. Take it out of your pocket and throw it over to me."

"Why, this is robbery."

"You are at liberty to call the coast-guardman."

And *Clubin* fixed his eye on Rantaine.

"Stay, Mess *Clubin*," said Rantaine, making a slight forward movement, and holding out his open hand.

The title "Mess" was a delicate flattery.

"Stay where you are, Rantaine."

"Mess *Clubin*, let us come to terms. I offer you half."

Clubin crossed his arms, still showing the barrels of his revolver.

"Rantaine, what do you take me for? I am an honest man."

And he added after a pause:

"I must have the whole."

Rantaine muttered between his teeth, "This fellow's of a stern sort."

The eye of *Clubin* lighted up, his voice became clear and sharp as steel. He cried:

"I see that you are laboring under a mistake. Robbery is your name, not mine. My name is *Restitution*. Hark you, Rantaine. Ten years ago you left *Guernsey* one night, taking with you the cash-box of a certain partnership concern, containing fifty thousand francs which belonged to you, but forgetting to leave behind you fifty thousand francs which were the property of another. Those fifty thousand francs, the money of your partner the excellent and worthy *Mess Lethierry*, make at present, at compound interest, calculated for ten years, eighty thousand, six hundred and sixty-six francs. You went into a money-changer's yesterday. I'll give you his name—*Rébuchet*, in *St. Vincent Street*. You counted out to him seventy-six thousand francs in French bank-notes; in exchange for which he gave you three notes of the Bank of England for one thousand pounds sterling each, plus the exchange. You put these bank-notes in the iron tobacco-box, and the iron tobacco-box into your double fob on the right hand side. On the part of *Mess Lethierry*, I shall be content with that. I start tomorrow for *Guernsey*, and intend to hand it to him. Rantaine, the three-master lying-to out yonder is the *Tamaulipas*. You have had your luggage put aboard there with the other things belonging to the crew. You want to leave France. You have your reasons. You are going to *Arequipa*. The boat is coming to fetch you. You are awaiting it. It is at hand. You can hear it. It depends on me whether you go or stay. No more words. Fling me the tobacco-box."

Rantaine dipped his hand in the fob, drew out a little box, and threw it to Clubin. It was the iron tobacco-box. It fell and rolled at Clubin's feet.

Clubin knelt without lowering his gaze; felt about for the box with his left hand, keeping all the while his eyes and the six barrels of the revolver fixed upon Rantaine.

Then he cried :

"Turn your back, my friend."

Rantaine turned his back.

Sieur Clubin put the revolver under one arm, and touched the spring of the tobacco-box. The lid flew open.

It contained four bank-notes; three of a thousand pounds, and one of ten pounds.

He folded up the three bank-notes of a thousand pounds each, replaced them in the iron tobacco-box, shut the lid again, and put it in his pocket.

Then he picked up a stone, wrapped it in the ten-pound note, and said :

"You may turn round again."

Rantaine turned.

Sieur Clubin continued :

"I told you I would be contented with three thousand pounds. Here, I return you ten pounds."

And he threw to Rantaine the note enfolding the stone.

Rantaine, with a movement of his foot, sent the bank-note and the stone into the sea.

"As you please," said Clubin. "You must be rich. I am satisfied."

The noise of oars, which had been continually drawing nearer during the dialogue, ceased. They knew by this that the boat had arrived at the base of the cliff.

"Your vehicle waits below. You can go, Rantaine."

Rantaine advanced towards the steps of stones, and rapidly disappeared.

Clubin moved cautiously towards the edge of the escarpment, and watched him descending.

The boat had stopped near the last stage of the rocks, at the very spot where the coast-guardman had fallen.

Still observing Rantaine stepping from stone to stone, Clubin muttered :

"A good number 619. He thought himself alone. Rantaine thought there were only two there. I alone knew that there were three."

He perceived at his feet the telescope which had dropped from the hands of the coast-guardman.

The sound of oars was heard again. Rantaine had stepped into the boat, and the rowers had pushed out to sea.

When Rantaine was safely in the boat, and the cliff was beginning to recede from his eyes, he arose again abruptly. His features were convulsed with rage; he clinched his fist and cried :

"Ha! he is the devil himself; a villain!"

A few seconds later, Clubin, from the top of the rock, while bringing his telescope to bear upon the boat, heard distinctly the following words articulated by a loud voice and mingling with the noise of the sea :

"Sieur Clubin, you are an honest man; but you will not be offended if I write to Lethierry to acquaint him with this matter; and we have here in the boat a sailor from Guernsey, who is one of the crew of the Tamaulipas; his name is Ahier-Tostevin, and he will return to St. Malo on Zuela's next voyage, to bear testimony to the fact of my having returned to you, on Mess Lethierry's account, the sum of three thousand pounds sterling."

It was Rantaine's voice.

Clubin rarely did things by halves. Motionless as the coast-guardman had been and in the exact same place, his eye still at the telescope, he did not lose sight of the boat for one moment. He saw it growing less amidst the waves; watched it disappear and reappear, and approach the vessel, which was lying-to; finally he recognized the tall figure of Rantaine on the deck of the Tamaulipas.

When the boat was raised, and slung again to the davits, the Tamaulipas was in motion once more. The land-breeze was fresh, and she spread all her sails. Clubin's glass continued fixed upon her outline growing more and more indistinct; until half an hour later, when the Tamaulipas had become only a dark shape upon the horizon, growing smaller and smaller against the pale twilight in the sky.

IX.

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR PERSONS WHO
EXPECT OR FEAR THE ARRIVAL OF
LETTERS FROM BEYOND SEA.

ON that evening, *Sieur Clubin* returned late.

One of the causes of his delay was, that before going to his inn, he had paid a visit to the *Dinan* gate of the town, a place where there were several wine-shops. In one of these wine-shops, where he was not known, he had bought a bottle of brandy, which he placed in the pocket of his overcoat, as if he desired to conceal it. Then, as the *Durande* was to start on the following morning, he had taken a turn abroad to satisfy himself that everything was in order.

When *Sieur Clubin* returned to the *Jean Auberge*, there was no one left in the lower room except the old sea captain, *M. Gertrais-Gaboureau*, who was drinking a jug of ale and smoking his pipe.

M. Gertrais-Gaboureau saluted *Sieur Clubin* between a whiff and a draught of ale.

"How d'ye do, Captain *Clubin*?"

"Good evening, Captain *Gertrais*."

"Well, the *Tamaulipas* is gone."

"Ah!" said *Clubin*, "I did not observe."

Captain Gertrais-Gaboureau expectorated and said:

"*Zuela* has decamped."

"When was that?"

"This evening."

"Where is he gone?"

"To the devil."

"No doubt; but where is that?"

"To *Arequipa*."

"I knew nothing of it," said *Clubin*.

He added:

"I am going to bed."

He lighted his candle, walked towards the door, and returned.

"Have you ever been at *Arequipa*, Captain?"

"Yes; some years ago."

"Where do they touch on that voyage?"

"A little everywhere; but the *Tamaulipas* will touch nowhere."

M. Gertrais-Gaboureau emptied his pipe upon the corner of a plate and continued:

"You know the lugger called the *Trojan Horse*, and that fine three-master, the *Trentemouzin*, which are gone to *Cardiff*? I was against their sailing on account of the weather. They have returned in a fine state. The lugger was laden with turpentine; she sprang a leak, and in working the pumps they pumped up with the water all her cargo. As to the three-master, she has suffered most above water. Her cut-water, her headrail, the stock of her larboard anchor are broken. Her standing jibboom is gone clean by the cap. As for the jibshrouds and bobstays, go and see what they look like. The mizenmast is not injured, but has had a severe shock. All the iron of the bowsprit has given way; and it is an extraordinary fact that, though the bowsprit itself is not scratched, it is completely stripped. The larboard-bow of the vessel is stove in a good three feet square. This is what comes of not taking advice."

Clubin had placed the candle on the table, and had begun to readjust a row of pins which he kept in the collar of his overcoat. He continued:

"Didn't you say, Captain, that the *Tamaulipas* would not touch anywhere?"

"Yes; she goes direct to *Chili*."

"In that case, she can send no news of herself on the voyage."

"I beg your pardon, Captain *Clubin*. In the first place, she can send any letters by vessels she may meet sailing for *Europe*."

"That is true."

"Then there is the ocean letter-box."

"What do you mean by the ocean letter-box?"

"Don't you know what that is, Captain *Clubin*?"

"No."

"When you pass the straits of *Magellan*—"

"Well."

"Snow all round you; always bad weather; ugly down-casters, and bad seas."

"Well."

"When you have doubled *Cape Monmouth*—"

"Well, what next?"

"Then you double *Cape Valentine*."

"And then?"

"Why, then you double Cape Isidore."

"And afterwards?"

"You double Point Anne."

"Good. But what is it you call the ocean letter-box?"

"We are coming to that. Mountains on the right, mountains on the left. Penguins and stormy petrels all about. A terrible place. Ah! by Jove, what a howling and what cracks you get there! The hurricane wants no help. That's the place for holding on to the sheer-rails; for reefing topsails. That's where you take in the mainsail, and fly the jibsail; or take in the jibsail and try the stormjib. Gusts upon gusts! And then, sometimes four, five, or six days of scudding under bare poles. Often only a rag of canvas left. What a dance! Squalls enough to make a three-master skip like a flea. I saw once a cabin-boy hanging on to the jibboom of an English brig, The True Blue, knocked, jibboom and all, to ten thousand nothings. Fellows are swept into the air there like butterflies. I saw the second mate of the 'Revenue,' a pretty schooner, knocked from under the forecross tree, and killed dead. I have had my sheer-rails smashed, and come out with all my sails in ribbons. Frigates of fifty guns make water like wicker baskets. And the damnable coast! Nothing can be imagined more dangerous. Rocks all jagged-edged. You come, by and by, to Port Famine. There it's worse and worse. The worst seas I ever saw in my life. The devils own latitudes. All of a sudden you spy the words, painted in red, 'Post Office.'"

"What do you mean, Captain Gertrais?"

"I mean, Captain Clubin, that immediately after doubling Point Anne you see, on a rock, a hundred feet high, a great post with a barrel suspended to the top. This barrel is the letter-box. The English sailors must needs go and write up there 'Post Office.' What had they to do with it? It is the ocean post-office. It isn't the property of that worthy gentleman, the King of England. The box is common to all. It belongs to every flag. *Post Office*, there's a crack-jaw word for

you. It produces an effect on me as if the devil had suddenly offered me a cup of tea. I will tell you now how the postal arrangements are carried out. Every vessel which passes sends to the post a boat with despatches. A vessel coming from the Atlantic, for instance, sends there its letters for Europe; and a ship coming from the Pacific, its letters for New Zealand or California. The officer in command of the boat puts his packet into the barrel, and takes away any packet he finds there. You take charge of these letters, and the ship which comes after you takes charge of yours. As ships are always going to and fro, the continent whence you come is that to which I am going. I carry your letters; you carry mine. The barrel is made fast to the post with a chain. And it rains, snows and hails! A pretty sea. The imps of Satan fly about on every side. The Tamaulipas will pass there. The barrel has a good lid with a hinge, but no padlock. You see, a fellow can write to his friends this way. The letters come safely."

"It is very curious," muttered Clubin thoughtfully.

Captain Gertrais-Gaboureau returned to his bottle of ale.

"If that vagabond Zuela should write (continued Clubin aside), the scoundrel puts his scrawl into the barrel at Magellan, and in four months I have his letter."

"Well, Captain Clubin, do you start to-morrow?"

Clubin, absorbed in a sort of somnambulism, did not notice the question; and Captain Gertrais repeated it.

Clubin woke up.

"Of course, Captain Gertrais. It is my day. I must start to-morrow morning."

"If it was my case, I shouldn't, Captain Clubin. The hair of the dog's coat feels damp. For two nights past, the sea-birds have been flying wildly round the lantern of the lighthouse. A bad sign. I have a storm-glass, too, which gives me a warning. The moon is at her second quarter; it is the maximum of humidity. I noticed to-day some pimpernels with

their leaves shut, and a field of clover with its stalks all stiff. The worms come out of the ground to-day; the flies sting; the bees keep close to their hives; the sparrows chatter together. You can hear the sound of bells from far off. I heard to-night the Angelus at St. Lunaire. And then the sun set angry. There will be a good fog to-morrow, mark my words. I don't advise you to put to sea. I dread the fog a good deal more than a hurricane. It's a nasty neighbor that."

BOOK VI.

THE DRUNKEN STEERSMAN AND THE SOBER CAPTAIN.

I.

THE DOUVRES.

AT about five leagues out, in the open sea, to the south of Guernsey, opposite Pleinmont Point, and between the Channel Islands and St. Malo, there is a group of rocks, called the Douvres. The spot is dangerous.

This term Douvres, applied to rocks and cliffs, is very common. There is, for example, near the *Côtes du Nord*, a Douvre, on which a lighthouse is now being constructed, a dangerous reef; but one which must not be confounded with the rock above referred to.

The nearest point on the French coast to the Douvres is Cape Bréhat. The Douvres are a little further from the coast of France than from the nearest of the Channel Islands. The distance from Jersey may be pretty nearly measured by the extreme length of Jersey. If the Island of Jersey could be turned round upon Corbière, as upon a hinge, St. Catherine's Point would almost touch the Douvres, at a distance of more than four leagues.

In these civilized regions the wildest rocks are rarely desert places. Smugglers are met with at Hagot, custom-house men at Binic, Celts at Bréhat, oyster-dredgers at Cancale, rabbit-shooters at Césambre

or Cæsar's Island, crab-gatherers at Brecqhou, trawlers at the Minquiers, dredgers at Ecréhou, but no one is ever seen upon the Douvres.

The sea birds alone make their home there.

No spot in the ocean is more dreaded. The Casquets, where it is said the *Blanche Nef* was lost; the Bank of Calvados; the Needles in the Isle of Wight; the Ronesse, which makes the coast of Beaulieu so dangerous; the sunken reefs at Prével, which block the entrance to Merquel, and which necessitates the red-painted beacon in twenty fathoms of water, the treacherous approaches to Etables and Plouha; the two granite Druids to the south of Guernsey, the Old Anderlo and the Little Anderlo, the Corbière, the Hanways, the Isle of Ras, associated with terror in the proverb:

*"Si jamais tu passes le Ras,
Si tu ne meurs, tu trembleras,"*

the Mortes-Femmes, the Déroute between Guernsey and Jersey, the Hardent between the Minquiers and Chousey, the Mauvais Cheval between Bouley Bay and Barneville, have not so evil a reputation. It would be preferable to have to encounter all these dangers, one after the other, than the Douvres once.

In all that perilous sea of the Channel, which is the Egean of the West, the Douvres have no equal in their terrors, except the Paternoster between Guernsey and Sark.

From the Paternoster, however, it is possible to give a signal—a ship in distress there may obtain succor. To the north rises Dicard or D'Icare Point, and to the south Grosnez. From the Douvres you can see nothing.

Its associations are the storm, the cloud, the wild sea, the desolate waste, the uninhabited coast. The blocks of granite are hideous and enormous—everywhere perpendicular wall—the severe inhospitality of the abyss.

It is in the open sea; the water about is very deep. A rock completely isolated like the Douvres attracts and shelters creatures which shun the haunts of men.

It is a sort of vast submarine cave of fossil coral branches—a drowned labyrinth. There, at a depth to which divers would find it difficult to descend, are caverns, haunts, and dusky mazes, where monstrous creatures multiply and destroy each other. Huge crabs devour fish and are devoured in their turn. Hideous shapes of living things, not created to be seen by human eyes, wander in this twilight. Vague forms of antennæ, tentacles, fins, open jaws, scales, and claws, float about there, quivering, growing larger, or decomposing and perishing in the gloom, while horrible swarms of swimming things prowl about seeking their prey.

To gaze into the depths of the sea is, in the imagination, like beholding the vast unknown, and from its most terrible point of view. The submarine gulf is analogous to the realm of night and dreams. There also is sleep, unconsciousness, or at least apparent unconsciousness, of creation. There, in the awful silence and darkness, the rude first forms of life, phantomlike, demoniacal, pursue their horrible instincts.

Forty years ago, two rocks of singular form signalled the Douvres from afar to passers on the ocean. They were two vertical points, sharp and curved—their summits almost touching each other. They looked like the two tusks of an elephant rising out of the sea; but they were tusks, high as tall towers, of an elephant huge as a mountain. These two natural towers, rising out of the obscure home of marine monsters, only left a narrow passage between them, where the waves rushed through. This passage, tortuous and full of angles, resembled a straggling street between high walls. The two twin rocks are called the Douvres. There was the Great Douvre and the Little Douvre; one was sixty feet high, the other forty. The ebb and flow of the tide had at last worn away part of the base of the towers, and a violent equinoctial gale on the 26th of October, 1859, overthrew one of them. The smaller one, which still remains, is worn and tottering.

One of the most singular of the Douvres is a rock known as "The Man." This still exists. Some fisherman in the last

century visiting this spot found on the height of the rock a human body. By its side were a number of empty sea-shells. A sailor escaped from shipwreck had found a refuge there; had lived some time upon rock limpets, and had died. Hence its name of "The Man."

The solitudes of the sea are peculiarly dismal. The things which pass there seem to have no relation to the human race; their objects are unknown. Such is the isolation of the Douvres. All around, as far as eye can reach, spreads the vast and restless sea.

II.

AN UNEXPECTED FLASK OF BRANDY.

ON the Friday morning, the day after the departure of the Tamaulipas, the Durande started again for Guernsey.

She left St. Malo at nine o'clock. The weather was fine; no haze. Old Captain Gertrai-Gaboureau was evidently in his dotage.

Sieur Clubin's numerous occupations had decidedly been unfavorable to the collection of freight for the Durande. He had only taken aboard some packages of Parisian articles for the fancy shops of St. Peter's Port; three cases for the Guernsey hospital, one containing yellow soap and long candles, and the other French shoe leather for soles, and choice Cordovan skins. He brought back from his last cargo a case of crushed sugar and three chests of congou tea, which the French custom-house would not permit to pass. He had embarked very few cattle; some bullocks only. These bullocks were in the hold loosely tethered.

There were six passengers aboard; a Guernsey man, two inhabitants of St. Malo, dealers in cattle: a "tourist,"—a phrase already in vogue at this period—a Parisian citizen, probably travelling on commercial affairs, and an American engaged in distributing Bibles.

Without reckoning Clubin, the crew of the Durande amounted to seven men; a helmsman, a stoker, a ship's carpenter, and a cook—serving as sailors in case of need—two engineers, and a cabin boy.

One of the two engineers was also a practical mechanic. This man, a bold and intelligent Dutch negro, who had originally escaped from the sugar plantations of Surinam, was named Imbrancam. The negro, Imbrancam, understood and attended admirably to the engine. In the early days of the "Devil Boat," his black face, appearing now and then at the top of the engine-room stairs, had contributed not a little to sustain its diabolical reputation.

The helmsman, a native of Guernsey, but of a family originally from Cotentin, bore the name of Tangrouille. The Tangrouilles were an old noble family.

This was strictly true. The Channel Islands are like England, an aristocratic region. Castes exist there still. The castes have their peculiar ideas, which are, in fact, their protection. These notions of caste are everywhere similar; in Hindostan, as in Germany, nobility is won by the sword; lost by soiling the hands with labor: but preserved by idleness. To do nothing, is to live nobly; whoever abstains from work is honored. A trade is fatal. In France, in old times, there was no exception to this rule, except in the case of glass manufacturers. Emptying bottles being then one of the glories of gentlemen, making them was probably, for that reason, not considered dishonorable. In the Channel archipelago, as in Great Britain, he who would remain noble must contrive to be rich. A working man cannot possibly be a gentleman. If he has ever been one, he is so no longer. Yonder sailor, perhaps, descends from the Knights Bannerets, but is nothing but a sailor. Thirty years ago, a real Gorges, who would have had rights over the Seigniory of Gorges, confiscated by Philip Augustus, gathered sea-weed, naked-footed, in the sea. A Carteret is a wagoner in Sark. There are at Jersey a draper, and at Guernsey a shoemaker, named Gruchy, who claim to be Grouchys, and cousins of the marshal of Waterloo. The old registers of the Bishopric of Coutances make mention of a Seigniory of Tangroville, evidently from Tancarville on the lower Seine, which is identical with Montmorency.

In the fifteenth century, Johan de Héroutdeville, archer and *étouffe* of the Sire de Tangroville, bore behind him "*son corset et ses autres harnois*." In May, 1371, at Pontorson, at the review of Bertrand du Guesclin, Monsieur de Tangroville rendered his homage as Knight Bachelor. In the Norman islands, if a noble falls into poverty, he is soon eliminated from the order. A mere change of pronunciation is enough. Tangroville becomes Tangrouille, and the thing is done.

This had been the fate of the helmsman of the Durande.

At the Bordagé of St. Peter's Port, there is a dealer in old iron named Ingrouille, who is probably an Ingroville. Under Lewis le Gros the Ingroilles possessed three parishes in the district of Valognes. A certain Abbé Trigan has written an Ecclesiastical History of Normandy. This chronicler Trigan was the curé of the Seigniory of Digoville. The Sire of Digoville, if he had sunk to a lower grade, would have been called Digouille.

Tangrouille, this probable Tancarville, and possible Montmorency, had an ancient noble quality, but a grave failing for a steersman; he got drunk occasionally.

Sieur Clubin had obstinately determined to retain him. He answered for his conduct to Mess Lethierry.

Tangrouille the helmsman never left the vessel; he slept aboard.

On the eve of their departure, when Sieur Clubin came at a late hour to inspect the vessel, the steersman was in his hammock asleep.

In the night Tangrouille awoke. It was his nightly habit. Every drunkard who is not his own master has his secret hiding-place. Tangrouille had his, which he called his store. The secret store of Tangrouille was in the hold. He had placed it there to put others off the scent. He thought it certain that his hiding-place was known only to himself. Captain Clubin, being a sober man himself, was strict. The little rum or gin which the helmsman could conceal from the vigilant eyes of the captain, he kept in reserve in this mysterious corner of the hold, and nearly every night he had a stolen inter-

view with the contents of this store. The surveillance was rigorous, the orgie was a poor one, and Tangrouille's nightly excesses were generally confined to two or three furtive draughts. Sometimes it happened that the store was empty. This night Tangrouille had found there an unexpected bottle of brandy. His joy was great; but his astonishment greater. From what cloud had it fallen? He could not remember when or how he had ever brought it into the ship. He soon, however, consumed the whole of it; partly from motives of prudence, and partly from a fear that the brandy might be discovered and seized. The bottle he threw overboard. In the morning, when he took the helm, Tangrouille exhibited a slight oscillation of the body.

He steered, however, pretty nearly as usual.

With regard to Clubin, he had gone, as the reader knows, to sleep at the Jean Auberge.

Clubin always wore, under his shirt, a leathern travelling belt, in which he kept a reserve of twenty guineas; he took this belt off only at night. Inside the belt was his name "Clubin," written by himself on the rough leather, with thick lithographer's ink, which is indelible.

On rising, just before his departure, he put into this girdle the iron box containing the seventy-five thousand francs in bank notes; then, as he was accustomed to do, he buckled the belt round his body.

III.

CONVERSATIONS INTERRUPTED.

THE Durande started pleasantly. The passengers, as soon as their bags and portmanteaus were installed upon and under the benches, took that customary survey of the vessel which seems indispensable under the circumstances. Two of the passengers—the tourist and the Parisian—had never seen a steam-vessel before, and from the moment the paddles began to revolve, they stood admiring the foam. Then they looked with wonderment at the smoke. Then they examined one by one, and almost piece by piece,

upon the upper and lower deck, all those naval appliances such as rings, grappels, hooks and bolts, which, with their nice precision and adaptation, form a kind of colossal *bijouterie*—a sort of iron jewelry, fantastically gilded with rust by the weather. They walked round the little signal gun upon the upper deck. "Chained up like a sporting dog," observed the tourist. "And covered with a waterproof coat to prevent its taking cold," added the Parisian. As they left the land further behind, they indulged in the customary observations upon the view of St. Malo. "One passenger laid down the axiom that the approach to a place by sea is always deceptive; and that at a league from the shore, for example, nothing could more resemble Ostend than Dunkirk. He completed his series of remarks on Dunkirk by the observation that one of its two floating lights painted red was called *Ruytingen*, and the other *Mardyck*."

St. Malo, meanwhile, grew smaller in the distance, and finally disappeared from view.

The aspect of the sea was a vast calm. The furrow left in the water by the vessel was a long double line edged with foam, and stretching straight behind them as far as the eye could see.

A straight line drawn from St. Malo in France to Exeter in England would touch the island of Guernsey. The straight line at sea is not always the one chosen. Steam-vessels, however, have, to a certain extent, a power of following the direct course, denied to sailing ships.

The wind in co-operation with the sea is a combination of forces. A ship is a combination of appliances. Forces are machines of infinite power. Machines are forces of limited power. That struggle which we call navigation is between these two organizations, the one inexhaustible, the other intelligent.

Mind, directing the mechanism, forms the counterbalance to the infinite power of the opposing forces. But the opposing forces, too, have their organization. The elements are conscious of where they go, and what they are about. No force is merely blind. It is the function of man

to keep watch upon these natural agents, and to discover their laws.

While these laws are still in great part undiscovered, the struggle continues, and in this struggle navigation, by the help of steam, is a perpetual victory won by human skill every hour of the day, and upon every point of the sea. The admirable feature in steam navigation is, that it disciplines the very ship herself. It diminishes her obedience to the winds, and increases her docility to man.

The *Durande* had never worked better at sea than on that day. She made her way marvellously.

Towards eleven o'clock, a fresh breeze blowing from the nor'-nor'-west, the *Durande* was off the Minquiers, under little steam, keeping her head to the west, on the starboard tack, and close up to the wind. The weather was still fine and clear. The trawlers, however, were making for shore.

By little and little, as if each one was anxious to get into port, the sea became clear of the boats.

It could not be said that the *Durande* was keeping quite her usual course. The crew gave no thought to such matters. The confidence in the captain was absolute; yet, perhaps through the fault of the helmsman, there was a slight deviation. The *Durande* appeared to be making rather towards Jersey than Guernsey. A little after eleven the captain rectified the vessel's course, and put her head fair for Guernsey. It was only a little time lost, but in short days time lost has its inconveniences. It was a February day, but the sun shone brightly.

Tangrouille, in his half-intoxicated state, had not a very sure arm, nor a very firm footing. The result was, that the helmsman lurched pretty often, which also retarded progress.

The wind had almost entirely fallen.

The Guernsey passenger, who had a telescope in his hand, brought it to bear from time to time upon a little cloud of gray mist, lightly moved by the wind, in the extreme western horizon. It resembled a fleecy down sprinkled with dust.

Captain Clubin wore his ordinary

austere, Puritan-like expression of countenance. He appeared to redouble his attention.

All was peaceful and almost joyous on board the *Durande*. The passengers chatted. It is possible to judge of the state of the sea in a passage with the eyes closed, by noting the *tremolo* of the conversation about you. The full freedom of mind among the passengers answers to the perfect tranquillity of the waters.

It is impossible, for example, that a conversation like the following could take place otherwise than on a very calm sea:

"Observe that pretty green and red fly."

"It has lost itself out at sea, and is resting on the ship."

"Flies do not soon get tired."

"No doubt; they are light; the wind carries them."

"An ounce of flies was once weighed, and afterwards counted; and it was found to comprise no less than six thousand two hundred and sixty-eight."

The Guernsey passenger with the telescope had approached the St. Malo cattle dealer; and their talk was something in this vein:

"The Aubrac bull has a round and thick buttock, short legs, and a yellowish hide. He is slow at work by reason of the shortness of his legs."

"In that matter the Salers beats the Aubrac."

"I have seen, Sir, two beautiful bulls in my life. The first had the legs low, the breast thick, the rump full, the haunches large, a good length of neck to the udder, withers of good height, the skin easy to strip. The second had all the signs of good fattening, a thickset back, neck and shoulders strong, coat white and brown, rump sinking."

"That's the Cotentin race."

"Yes; with a slight cross with the Angus or Suffolk bull."

"You may believe it if you please, Sir, but I assure you in the south they hold shows of donkeys."

"Shows of donkeys?"

"Of donkeys, on my honor. And the ugliest are the most admired."

"Ha! it is the same as with the mule shows. The ugly ones are considered best."

"Exactly. Take also the Poitevin mares; large belly, thick legs."

"The best mule known is a sort of barrel upon four posts."

"Beauty in beasts is a different thing from beauty in men."

"And particularly in women."

"That is true."

"As for me, I like a woman to be pretty."

"I am more particular about her being well dressed."

"Yes; neat, clean, and well set off."

"Looking just new. A pretty girl ought always to appear as if she had just been turned out by a jeweller."

"To return to my bulls; I saw these two sold at the market at Thouars."

"The market at Thouars; I know it very well. The Bonneaus of La Rochelle, and the Babas corn merchants at Marans, I don't know whether you have heard of them attending that market."

The tourist and the Parisian were conversing with the American of the Bibles.

"Sir," said the tourist, "I will tell you the tonnage of the civilized world. France 716,000 tons; Germany, 1,000,000; the United States, 5,000,000; England, 5,500,000; add the small vessels. Total, 12,904,000 tons carried in 145,000 vessels scattered over the waters of the globe."

The American interrupted:

"It is the United States, Sir, which have 5,500,000."

"I defer," said the tourist. "You are an American?"

"Yes, sir."

"I defer still more."

There was a pause. The American missionary was considering whether this was a case for the offer of a Bible.

"Is it true, Sir," asked the tourist, "that you have a passion for nicknames in America, so complete, that you confer them upon all your celebrated men, and that you call your famous Missouri banker, Thomas Benton, 'Old Lingot,'"

"Yes; just as we call Zachary Taylor 'Old Zach.'"

"And General Harrison, 'Old Tip;' am I right? and General Jackson, 'Old Hickory?'"

"Because Jackson is hard as hickory wood; and because Harrison beat the redskins at *Tippecanoe*."

"It is an odd fashion that of yours."

"It is our custom. We call Van Buren 'The Little Wizard;' Seward, who introduced the small bank-notes, 'Little Billy;' and Douglas, the democrat senator from Illinois, who is four feet high and very eloquent, 'The Little Giant.' You may go from Texas to the State of Maine without hearing the name of Mr. Cass. They say the 'Great Michigander.' Nor the name of Clay; they say, 'The miller's boy with the scar.' Clay is the son of a miller."

"I should prefer to say 'Clay' or 'Cass,'" said the Parisian. "It's shorter."

"Then you would be out of the fashion. We call Corwin, who is the Secretary of the Treasury, 'The Wagoner boy;' Daniel Webster, 'Black Dan.' As to Winfield Scott, as his first thought after beating the English at Chippeway, was to sit down to dine, we call him 'Quick—a basin of soup.'"

The small white mist perceived in the distance had become larger. It filled now a segment of fifteen degrees above the horizon. It was like a cloud loitering along the water for want of wind to stir it. The breeze had almost entirely died away. The sea was glassy. Although it was not yet noon, the sun was becoming pale. It lighted but seemed to give no warmth.

"I fancy," said the tourist, "that we shall have a change of weather."

"Probably rain," said the Parisian.

"Or fog," said the American.

"In Italy," remarked the tourist, "Molfetta is the place where there falls the least rain; and Tolmezzo, where there falls the most."

At noon, according to the usage of the Channel Islands, the bell sounded for dinner. Those dined who desired. Some passengers had brought with them provisions, and were eating merrily on the after-deck. Clubin did not eat.

While this eating was going on, the conversations continued.

The Guernsey man, having probably a scent for Bibles, approached the American. The latter said to him:

"You know this sea?"

"Very well; I belong to this part."

"And I, too," said one of the St. Malo men.

The native of Guernsey followed with a bow and continued:

"We are fortunately well out at sea now; I should not have liked a fog when we were off the Minquiers."

The American said to the St. Malo man:

"Islanders are more at home on the sea than the folks of the coast."

"True; we coast people are only half dipped in salt water."

"What are the Minquiers?" asked the American.

The St. Malo man replied:

"They are an ugly reef of rocks."

"There are also the Grelets," said the Guernsey man.

"Parbleu!" ejaculated the other.

"And the Chouas," added the Guernsey man.

The inhabitant of St. Malo laughed.

"As for that," said he, "there are the Savages also."

"And the Monks," observed the Guernsey man.

"And the Duck," cried the St. Maloite.

"Sir," remarked the inhabitant of Guernsey, "you have an answer for everything."

The tourist interposed with a question: "Have we to pass all that legion of rocks?"

"No; we have left it to the sou'-south-east. It is behind us."

And the Guernsey passenger continued:

"Big and little rocks together, the Grilets have fifty-seven peaks."

"And the Minquiers forty-eight," said the other.

The dialogue was now confined to the St. Malo and the Guernsey passenger.

"It strikes me, Monsieur St. Malo, that there are three rocks which you have not included."

"I mentioned all."

"From the Derée to the Maître Ile."

"And Les Maisons?"

"Yes; seven rocks in the midst of the Minquiers."

"I see you know the very stones."

"If I didn't know the stones, I should not be an inhabitant of St. Malo."

"It is amusing to hear French people's reasonings."

The St. Malo man bowed in his turn, and said:

"The Savages are three rocks."

"And the Monks two."

"And the Duck one."

"The Duck; this is only one, of course."

"No: for the Suarde consists of four rocks."

"What do you mean by the Suarde?" asked the inhabitant of Guernsey.

"We call the Suarde what you call the Chouas."

"It is a queer passage, that between the Chouas and the Duck."

"It is impassable except for the birds."

"And the fish."

"Scarcely: in bad weather they give themselves hard knocks against the walls."

"There is sand near the Minquiers?"

"Around the Maisons."

"There are eight rocks visible from Jersey."

"Visible from the strand of Azette; that's correct: but not eight; only seven."

"At low water you can walk about the Minquiers?"

"No doubt; there would be sand above water."

"And what of the Dirouilles?"

"The Dirouilles bear no resemblance to the Minquiers."

"They are very dangerous."

"They are near Granville."

"I see that you St. Malo people, like us, enjoy sailing in these seas."

"Yes," replied the St. Malo man, "with the difference that we say, 'We have the habit,' you, 'We are fond.'"

"You make good sailors."

"I am myself a cattle merchant."

"Who was that famous sailor born of St. Malo?"

"Surcouf?"

"Another?"

"Duguay-Trouin."

Here the Parisian commercial man chimed in :

"Duguay-Trouin? He was captured by the English. He was as agreeable as he was brave. A young English lady fell in love with him. It was she who procured him his liberty."

At this moment a voice like thunder was heard crying out :

"You are drunk, man !"

IV.

CAPTAIN CLUBIN DISPLAYS ALL HIS GREAT QUALITIES.

EVERYBODY turned.

It was the captain calling to the helmsman.

Sieur Clubin's tone and manner evidenced that he was extremely angry, or that he wished to appear so.

A well-timed burst of anger sometimes removes responsibility, and sometimes shifts it on to other shoulders.

The captain, standing on the bridge between the two paddle-boxes, fixed his eyes on the helmsman. He repeated, between his teeth, "Drunkard." The unlucky Tangrouille hung his head.

The fog had made progress. It filled by this time nearly one-half of the horizon. It seemed to advance from every quarter at the same time. There is something in a fog of the nature of a drop of oil upon the water. It enlarged insensibly. The light wind moved it onward slowly and silently. By little and little it took possession of the ocean. It was coming chiefly from the north-west, dead ahead: the ship had it before her prow, like a line of cliff moving vast and vague. It rose from the sea like a wall. There was an exact point where the wide waters entered the fog, and were lost to sight.

This line of the commencement of the fog was still above half-a-league distant. The interval was visibly growing less and less. The "Durande" made way; the fog made way also. It was drawing nearer to the vessel, while the vessel was drawing nearer to it.

Clubin gave the order to put on more steam, and to hold off the coast.

Thus for some time they skirted the edge of the fog; but still it advanced. The vessel, meanwhile, sailed in broad sunlight.

Time was lost in these manœuvres, which had little chance of success. Night-fall comes quickly in February. The native of Guernsey was meditating upon the subject of this fog. He said to the St. Malo men:

"It will be thick !"

"An ugly sort of weather at sea," observed one of the St. Malo men.

The other added:

"A kind of thing which spoils a good passage."

The Guernsey passenger approached Clubin, and said :

"I'm afraid, Captain, that the fog will catch us."

Clubin replied:

"I wished to stay at St. Malo, but I was advised to go."

"By whom ?"

"By some old sailors."

"You were certainly right to go," said the Guernsey man. "Who knows whether there will not be a tempest to-morrow? At this season you may wait and find it worse."

A few moments later, the Durande entered the fog bank.

The effect was singular. Suddenly those who were on the after-deck could not see those forward. A soft gray medium divided the ship in two.

Then the entire vessel passed into the fog. The sun became like a dull red moon. Everybody suddenly shivered. The passengers put on their overcoats, and the sailors their tarpaulins. The sea, almost without a ripple, was the more menacing from its cold tranquillity. All was pale and wan. The black funnel and the heavy smoke struggled with the dewy mist which enshrouded the vessel.

Dropping to westward was now useless. The captain kept the vessel's head again towards Guernsey, and gave orders to put on the steam.

The Guernsey passenger, hanging about

the engine-room hatchway, heard the negro Imbrancam talking to his engineer comrade. The passenger listened. The negro said:

"This morning, in the sun, we were going half steam on; now, in the fog, we put on steam."

The Guernsey man returned to Clubin.

"Captain Clubin, a look-out is useless; but have we not too much steam on?"

"What can I do, sir? We must make up for time lost through the fault of that drunkard of a helmsman."

"True, Captain Clubin."

And Clubin added:

"I am anxious to arrive. It is foggy enough by day; it would be rather too much at night."

The Guernsey man rejoined his St. Malo fellow-passengers, and remarked:

"We have an excellent captain."

At intervals, great waves of mist bore down heavily upon them, and blotted out the sun; which again issued out of them pale and sickly. The little that could be seen of the heavens resembled the long strips of painted sky, dirty and smeared with oil, among the old scenery of a theatre.

The Durande passed close to a cutter which had cast anchor for safety. It was the "Shealtiel" of Guernsey. The master of the cutter remarked the high speed of the steam-vessel. It struck him also that she was not in her exact course. She seemed to him to bear to westward too much. The apparition of this vessel under full steam in the fog surprised him.

Towards two o'clock the weather had become so thick that the captain was obliged to leave the bridge, and plant himself near the steersman. The sun had vanished, and all was fog. A sort of ashy darkness surrounded the ship. They were navigating in a pale shroud. They could see neither sky nor water.

There was not a breath of wind.

The can of turpentine suspended under the bridge, between the paddle-boxes, did not even oscillate.

The passengers had become silent.

The Parisian, however, hummed between his teeth the song of Béranger—"Un jour le bon Dieu s'éveillant."

One of the St. Malo passengers addressed him:

"You are from Paris, sir?"

"Yes, sir. *Il mit la tête à la fenêtre.*"

"What do they do in Paris?"

"*Leur planète a péri, peut-être.*—In Paris, sir, things are going on very badly."

"Then it's the same ashore as at sea."

"It is true; we have an abominable fog here."

"One which might involve us in misfortunes."

The Parisian exclaimed:

"Yes; and why all these misfortunes in the world? Misfortunes! What are they sent for, these misfortunes? What use do they serve? There was the fire at the Odéon theatre, and immediately a number of families thrown out of employment. Is that just? I don't know what is your religion, sir, but I am puzzled by all this."

"So am I," said the St. Malo man.

"Everything that happens here below," continued the Parisian, "seems to go wrong. It looks as if Providence, for some reason, no longer watched over the world."

The St. Malo man scratched the top of his head, like one making an effort to understand. The Parisian continued:

"Our guardian angel seems to be absent. There ought to be a decree against celestial absenteeism. He is at his country-house, and takes no notice of us; so all gets in disorder. It is evident that this guardian is not in the government; he is taking holiday, leaving some vicar—some seminarist angel, some wretched creature with sparrows'-wings—to look after affairs."

Captain Clubin who had approached the speakers during this conversation, laid his hand upon the shoulder of the Parisian.

"Silence, sir," he said. "Keep a watch upon your words. We are upon the sea."

No one spoke again aloud.

After a pause of five minutes, the Guernsey man, who had heard all this, whispered in the ear of the St. Malo passenger:

"A religious man, our captain."

It did not rain, but all felt their clothing wet. The crew took no heed of the way they were making; but there was increased sense of uneasiness. They seemed to have

entered into a doleful region. The fog makes a deep silence on the sea; it calms the waves, and stifles the wind. In the midst of this silence, the creaking of the *Durande* communicated a strange, indefinable feeling of melancholy and disquietude.

They passed no more vessels. If afar off, in the direction of Guernsey or in that of St. Malo, any vessels were at sea outside the fog, the *Durande*, submerged in the dense cloud, must have been invisible to them; while her long trail of smoke, attached to nothing, looked like a black comet in the pale sky.

Suddenly Clubin roared out:

"Hang-dog! you have played us an ugly trick. You will have done us some damage before we are out of this. You deserve to be put in irons. Get you gone, drunkard!"

And he seized the helm himself.

The steersman, humbled, shrunk away to take part in the duties forward.

The Guernsey man said:

"That will save us."

The vessel was still making way rapidly.

Towards three o'clock, the lower part of the fog began to clear, and they could see the sea again.

A mist can only be dispersed by the sun or the wind. By the sun is well: by the wind is not so well. At three o'clock in the afternoon, in the month of February, the sun is always weak. A return of the wind at this critical point in a voyage is not desirable. It is often the forerunner of a hurricane.

If there was any breeze, however, it was scarcely perceptible.

Clubin, with his eye on the binnacle, holding the tiller and steering, muttered to himself some words like the following, which reached the ears of the passengers:

"No time to be lost; that drunken rascal has retarded us."

His visage, meanwhile, was absolutely without expression.

The sea was less calm under the mist. A few waves were distinguishable. Little patches of light appeared on the surface of the water. These luminous patches attract the attention of the sailors. They indicate openings made by the wind

in the overhanging roof of fog. The cloud rose a little, and then sunk heavier. Sometimes the density was perfect. The ship was involved in a sort of foggy iceberg. At intervals this terrible circle opened a little, like a pair of pincers; showed a glimpse of the horizon, and then closed again.

Meanwhile the Guernsey man, armed with his spyglass, was standing like a sentinel in the fore part of the vessel.

An opening appeared for a moment, and was blotted out again.

The Guernsey man returned alarmed.

"Captain Clubin!"

"What is the matter?"

"We are steering right upon the Hanways."

"You are mistaken," said Clubin, coldly.

The Guernsey man insisted.

"I am sure of it."

"Impossible."

"I have just seen the rock in the horizon."

"Where?"

"Out yonder."

"It is the open sea there. Impossible."

And Clubin kept the vessel's head to the point indicated by the passenger.

The Guernsey man seized his spyglass again.

A moment later he came running aft again.

"Captain!"

"Well."

"Tack about!"

"Why?"

"I am certain of having seen a very high rock just ahead. It is the Great Hanway."

"You have seen nothing but a thicker bank of fog."

"It is the Great Hanway. Tack, in the name of Heaven!" Clubin gave the helm a turn.

V.

CLUBIN REACHES THE CROWNING-POINT OF GLORY.

A CRASH was heard. The ripping of a vessel's side upon a sunken reef in open

sea is the most dismal sound of which man can dream. The *Durande's* course was stopped short.

Several passengers were knocked down with the shock and rolled upon the deck.

The Guernsey man raised his hands to heaven :

"We are on the Hanways. I predicted it."

A long cry went up from the ship.

"We are lost."

The voice of Clubin, dry and short, was heard above all.

"No one is lost! Silence!"

The black form of Imbrancám, naked down to the waist, issued from the hatchway of the engine-room.

The negro said with self-possession :

"The water is gaining, Captain. The fires will soon be out."

The moment was terrible.

The shock was like that of a suicide. If the disaster had been wilfully sought, it could not have been more terrible. The *Durande* had rushed upon her fate as if she had attacked the rock itself. A point had pierced her sides like a wedge. More than six feet square of planking had gone; the stem was broken, the prow smashed, and the gaping hull drank in the sea with a horrible gulping noise. It was an entrance for wreck and ruin. The rebound was so violent that it had shattered the rudder pendants; the rudder itself hung unhinged and flapping. The rock had driven in her keel. Round about the vessel nothing was visible except a thick, compact fog, now become sombre. Night was gathering fast.

The *Durande* plunged forward. It was like the effort of a horse pierced through the entrails by the horns of a bull. All was over with her.

Tangrouille was sobered. Nobody is drunk in the moment of a shipwreck. He came down to the quarter-deck, went up again, and said :

"Captain, the water is gaining rapidly in the hold. In ten minutes it will be up to the scupper-holes."

The passengers ran about bewildered, wringing their hands, leaning over the bulwarks, looking down in the engine-

room, and making every other sort of useless movement in their terror. The tourist had fainted.

Clubin made a sign with his hand, and they were silent. He questioned Imbrancám :

"How long will the engines work yet?"

"Five or six minutes, Sir."

Then he interrogated the Guernsey passenger :

"I was at the helm. You saw the rock. On which bank of the Hanways are we?"

"On the Mauve. Just now, in the opening in the fog, I saw it clearly."

"If we're on the Mauve," remarked Clubin, "we have the Great Hanway on the port side, and the Little Hanway on the starboard bow; we are a mile from the shore."

The crew and passengers listened, fixing their eyes anxiously and attentively on the Captain.

Lightening the ship would have been of no avail, and indeed would have been hardly possible. In order to throw the cargo overboard, they would have had to open the ports and increase the chance of the water entering. To cast anchor would have been equally useless: they were stuck fast. Besides, with such a bottom for the anchor to drag, the chain would probably have fouled. The engines not being injured, and being workable while the fires were not extinguished, that is to say, for a few minutes longer, they could have made an effort, by help of steam and her paddles, to turn her astern off the rocks; but if they had succeeded, they must have settled down immediately. The rock, indeed, in some degree stopped the breach and prevented the entrance of the water. It was at least an obstacle; while the hole once freed, it would have been impossible to stop the leak or to work the pumps. To snatch a poniard from a wound in the heart is instant death to the victim. To free the vessel from the rock would have been simply to founder.

The cattle, on whom the water was gaining in the hold, were lowing piteously.

Clubin issued orders :

"Launch the long boat."

Imbrancam and Tangrouille rushed to execute the order. The boat was eased from her fastenings. The rest of the crew looked on stupefied.

"All hands to assist," cried Clubin.

This time all obeyed.

Clubin, self-possessed, continued to issue his orders in that old sea dialect, which French sailors of the present day would scarcely understand.

"Haul in a rope—Get a cable if the capstan does not work—Stop heaving—Keep the blocks clear—Lower away there—Bring her down stern and bows—Now then, all together, lads—Take care she don't lower stern first—There's too much strain on there—Hold the laniard of the stock tackle—Stand by there!"

The long boat was launched.

At that instant the *Durande's* paddles stopped, and the smoke ceased—the fires were drowned.

The passengers slipped down the ladder, and dropped hurriedly into the long boat. Imbrancam lifted the fainting tourist, carried him into the boat, and then boarded the vessel again.

The crew made a rush after the passengers—the cabin boy was knocked down, and the others were trampling upon him.

Imbrancam barred their passage.

"Not a man before the lad," he said.

He kept off the sailors with his two black arms, picked up the boy, and handed him down to the Guernsey man, who was standing upright in the boat.

The boy saved, Imbrancam made way for the others, and said:

"Pass on!"

Meanwhile Clubin had entered his cabin, and had made up a parcel containing the ship's papers and instruments. He took the compass from the binnacle, handed the papers and instruments to Imbrancam, and the compass to Tangrouille, and said to them:

"Get aboard the boat."

They obeyed. The crew had taken their places before them.

"Now," cried Clubin, "push off."

A cry arose from the long boat.

"What about yourself, Captain?"

"I will remain here."

Shipwrecked people have little time to deliberate, and not much for indulging in tender feeling. Those who were in the long boat and in comparative safety, however, felt an emotion which was not altogether selfish. All the voices shouted together:

"Come with us, Captain."

"No: I remain here."

The Guernsey man, who had some experience of the sea, replied:

"Listen to me, Captain. You are wrecked on the Hanways. Swimming, you would have only a mile to cross to Pleinmont. In a boat you can only land at Rocquaine, which is two miles. There are breakers, and there is the fog. Our boat will not get to Rocquaine in less than two hours. It will be a dark night. The sea is rising—the wind getting fresh. A squal is at hand. We are now ready to return and bring you off; but if bad weather comes on, that will be out of our power. You are lost if you stay there. Come with us."

The Parisian chimed in:

"The long boat is full—too full, it is true, and one more will certainly be one too many; but we are thirteen—a bad number for the boat, and it is better to overload her with a man than to take an ominous number. Come, Captain."

Tangrouille added:

"It was all my fault—not yours, Captain. It isn't fair for you to be left behind."

"I have decided to remain here," said Clubin. "The vessel must inevitably go to pieces in the tempest to-night. I won't leave her. When the ship is lost, the Captain is already dead. People shall not say I didn't do my duty to the end. Tangrouille, I forgive you."

Then, folding his arms, he cried:

"Obey orders! Let go the rope, and push off."

The long boat swayed to and fro. Imbrancam had seized the tiller. All the hands which were not rowing were raised towards the Captain—every mouth cried, "Cheers for Captain Clubin."

"An admirable fellow!" said the American.

"Sir," replied the Guernsey man, "he is one of the worthiest seamen afloat."

Tangrouille shed tears.

"If I had had the courage," he said, "I would have stayed with him."

The long boat pushed away, and was lost in the fog.

Nothing more was visible.

The beat of the oars grew fainter, and died away.

Clubin remained alone.

VI.

THE INTERIOR OF AN ABYSS SUDDENLY REVEALED.

WHEN Clubin found himself upon this rock, in the midst of the fog and the wide waters, far from all sound of human life, left for dead, alone with the tide rising around him, and night settling down rapidly, he experienced a feeling of profound satisfaction.

He had succeeded.

His dream was realized. The acceptance which he had drawn upon destiny at so long a date, had fallen due at last.

With him, to be abandoned there was, in fact, to be saved.

He was on the Hanways, one mile from the shore; he had about him seventy-five thousand francs. Never was shipwreck more scientifically accomplished. Nothing had failed. It is true, everything had been foreseen. From his early years Clubin had had an idea, to stake his reputation for honesty at life's gaming-table; to pass as a man of high honor, and to make that reputation his fulcrum for other things; to bide his time, to watch his opportunity; not to grope about blindly, but to seize boldly; to venture on one great stroke, only one; and to end by sweeping off the stakes, leaving fools behind him to gape and wonder. What stupid rogues fail in twenty times, he meant to accomplish at the first blow: and while they terminated a career on the gallows, he intended to finish with a fortune. The meeting with Rantaine had been a new light to him. He had immediately laid his plan—to compel Rantaine

to disgorge; to frustrate his threatened revelations by disappearing; to make the world believe him dead, the best of all modes of concealment; and for this purpose to wreck the *Durande*. The shipwreck was necessary to his designs. Lastly, he had the satisfaction of vanishing, leaving behind him a great renown, the crowning point of his existence. As he stood meditating on these things amid the wreck, Clubin might have been taken for some demon in a pleasant mood.

He had lived a lifetime for the sake of this one minute.

His whole exterior was expressive of the two words, "At last." A devilish tranquillity reigned in that sallow countenance.

His dull eye, the depth of which generally seemed to be impenetrable, became clear and terrible. The inward fire of his dark spirit was reflected there.

Man's inner nature, like that external world about him, has its electric phenomena. An idea is like a meteor; at the moment of its coming, the confused meditations which preceded it open a way, and a spark flashes forth. Bearing within one's self a power of evil, feeling an inward prey, brings to some minds a pleasure which is like a sparkle of light. The triumph of an evil purpose brightens up their visages. The success of certain cunning combinations, the attainment of certain cherished objects, the gratification of certain ferocious instincts, will manifest themselves in sinister but luminous appearances in their eyes. It is like a threatening dawn, a gleam of joy drawn out of the heart of a storm. These flashes are generated in the conscience in its states of cloud and darkness.

Some such signs were then exhibiting themselves in the pupils of those eyes. They were like nothing else that can be seen shining either above or here below.

All Clubin's pent-up wickedness found full vent now.

He gazed into the vast surrounding darkness, and indulged in a low, irrepressible laugh, full of sinister significance.

He was rich at last! rich at last!

The unknown future of his life was at length unfolding; the problem was solved

Clubin had plenty of time before him. The sea was rising, and consequently sustained the "Durande," and even raised her at last a little. The vessel kept firmly in its place among the rocks; there was no danger of her foundering. Besides, he determined to give the long-boat time to get clear off—to go to the bottom, perhaps. Clubin hoped it might.

Erect upon the deck of the shipwrecked vessel, he folded his arms, apparently enjoying that forlorn situation in the dark night.

Hypocrisy had weighed upon this man for thirty years. He had been evil itself, yoked with probity for a mate. He detested virtue with the feeling of one who has been trapped into a hateful match. He had always had a wicked premeditation; from the time when he attained manhood he had worn the cold and rigid armor of appearances. Underneath this was the demon of self. He had lived like a bandit in the disguise of an honest citizen. He had been the soft-spoken pirate; the bond-slave of honesty. He had been confined in garments of innocence, as in oppressive mummy cloths; had worn those angel wings which the devils find so wearisome in their fallen state. He had been overloaded with public esteem. It is arduous passing for a shining light. To preserve a perpetual equilibrium amid these difficulties, to think evil, to speak goodness—here had been indeed a labor. Such a life of contradictions had been Clubin's fate. It had been his lot—not the less onerous because he had chosen it himself—to preserve a good exterior, to be always presentable, to foam in secret, to smile while grinding his teeth. Virtue presented itself to his mind as something stifling. He had felt, sometimes, as if he could have gnawed those finger-ends which he was compelled to keep before his mouth.

To live a life which is a perpetual falsehood is to suffer unknown tortures. To be premeditating indefinitely a diabolical act, to have to assume austerity; to brood over secret infamy seasoned with outward good fame; to have continually to put the world off the scent; to present a perpetual illusion, and never to be one's self—is a bur-

densome task. To be constrained to dip the brush in that dark stuff within, to produce with it a portrait of candor; to fawn, to restrain and suppress one's self, to be ever on the *qui vive*; watching without ceasing to mask latent crimes with a face of healthy innocence; to transform deformity into beauty; to fashion wickedness into the shape of perfection; to tickle, as it were, with the point of a dagger, to put sugar with poison, to keep a bridle on every gesture and keep a watch over every tone, not even to have a countenance of one's own—what can be harder, what can be more torturing.

The odiousness of hypocrisy is obscurely felt by the hypocrite himself. Drinking perpetually of his own imposture is nauseating. The sweetness of tone which cunning gives to scoundrelism is repugnant to the scoundrel compelled to have it ever in the mouth; and there are moments of disgust when villainy seems on the point of vomiting its secret. To have to swallow that bitter saliva is horrible. Add to this picture his profound pride. There are strange moments in the history of such a life, when hypocrisy worships itself. There is always an inordinate egotism in roguery. The worm has the same mode of gliding along as the serpent, and the same manner of raising its head. The treacherous villain is the despot curbed and restrained, and only able to attain his ends by resigning himself to play a secondary part. He is summed-up littleness capable of enormities. The perfect hypocrite is a Titan dwarfed.

Clubin had a genuine faith that he had been ill-used. Why had not he the right to have been born rich? It was from no fault of his that it was otherwise. Deprived as he had been of the higher enjoyments of life, why had he been forced to labor—in other words, to cheat, to betray, to destroy? Why had he been condemned to this torture of flattering, cringing, fawning; to be always laboring for men's respect and friendship, and to wear night and day a face which was not his own? To be compelled to dissimulate was in itself to submit to a hardship. Men hate those to whom they have to lie. But now

the disguise was at an end. Clubin had taken his revenge.

On whom? On all! On everything!

Lethierry had never done him any but good services; so much the greater his spleen. He was revenged upon Lethierry.

He was revenged upon all those in whose presence he had felt constraint. It was his turn to be free now. Whoever had thought well of him was his enemy. He had felt himself their captive long enough.

Now he had broken through his prison walls. His escape was accomplished. That which would be regarded as his death, would be, in fact, the beginning of his life. He was about to begin the world again. The true Clubin had stripped off the false. In one hour the spell was broken. He had kicked Rantaine into space; overwhelmed Lethierry in ruin; human justice in night, and opinion in error. He had cast off all humanity; blotted out the whole world.

The name of God, that word of three letters, occupied his mind but little.

He had passed for a religious man. What was he now?

There are secret recesses in hypocrisy; or rather the hypocrite is himself a secret recess.

When Clubin found himself quite alone, that cavern in which his soul had so long lain hidden, was opened. He enjoyed a moment of delicious liberty. He revelled for that moment in the open air. He gave vent to himself in one long breath.

The depth of evil within him revealed itself in his visage. He expanded, as it were, with diabolical joy. The features of Rantaine by the side of his at that moment would have shown like the innocent expression of a new-born child.

What a deliverance was this plucking off of the old mask. His conscience rejoiced in the sight of its own monstrous nakedness, as it stepped forth to take its hideous bath of wickedness. The long restraint of men's respect seemed to have given him a peculiar relish for infamy. He experienced a certain lascivious enjoyment of wickedness. In those frightful moral abysses so rarely sounded, such

natures find atrocious delights—they are the obscenities of rascality. The long-endured insipidity of the false reputation for virtue gave him a sort of appetite for shame. In this state of mind men disdain their fellows so much, that they even long for the contempt which marks the ending of their unmerited homage. They feel a satisfaction in the freedom of degradation, and cast an eye of envy at baseness, sitting at its ease, clothed in ignominy and shame. Eyes that are forced to droop modestly are familiar with these stealthy glances at sin. From Messalina to Marie-Alacoque the distance is not great. Remember the histories of La Cadière and the nun of Louviers. Clubin, too, had worn the veil. Effrontery had always been the object of his secret admiration. He envied the painted courtesan, and the face of bronze of the professional ruffian. He felt a pride in surpassing her in artifices, and a disgust for the trick of passing for a saint. He had been the Tantalus of cynicism. And now, upon this rock, in the midst of this solitude, he could be frank and open. A bold plunge into wickedness—what a voluptuous sense of relief it brought with it. All the delights known to the fallen angels are summed up in this; and Clubin felt them in that moment. The long arrears of dissimulations were paid at last. Hypocrisy is an investment; the devil reimburses it. Clubin gave himself up to the intoxication of the idea, having no longer any eye upon him but that of Heaven. He whispered within himself, "I am a scoundrel," and felt profoundly satisfied.

Never had human conscience experienced such a full tide of emotions.

He was glad to be entirely alone, and yet would not have been sorry to have had some one there. He would have been pleased to have had a witness of his fiendish joy; gratified to have had opportunity of saying to society, "Thou fool."

The solitude, indeed, assured his triumph; but it made it less.

He was not himself to be spectator of his glory. Even to be in the pillory has its satisfaction, for everybody can see your infamy.

To compel the crowd to stand and gape is, in fact, an exercise of power. A malefactor standing upon a platform in the market-place, with the collar of iron around his neck, is master of all the glances which he constrains the multitude to turn towards him. There is a pedestal on yonder scaffolding. To be there—the centre of universal observation—is not this, too, a triumph? To direct the pupil of the public eye, is this not another form of supremacy? For those who worship an ideal wickedness, opprobrium is glory. It is a height from whence they can look down; a superiority at least of some kind; a pre-eminence in which they can display themselves royally. A gallows standing high in the gaze of all the world is not without some analogy with a throne. To be exposed is, at least, to be seen and studied.

Herein we have evidently the key to the wicked reigns of history. Nero burning Rome, Louis Quatorze treacherously seizing the Palatinate, the Prince Regent killing Napoleon slowly, Nicholas strangling Poland before the eyes of the civilized world, may have felt something akin to Clubin's joy. Universal execration derives a grandeur even from its vastness.

To be unmasked is a humiliation; but to unmask one's self is a triumph. There is an intoxication in the position, an insolent satisfaction in its contempt for appearances, a flaunting insolence in the nakedness with which it affronts the decencies of life.

These ideas in a hypocrite appear to be inconsistent, but in reality are not. All infamy is logical. Honey is gall. A character like that of Escobar has some affinity with that of the Marquis de Sade. In proof, we have Léotade. A hypocrite, being a personification of vice complete, includes in himself the two poles of perversity. Priest-like on one side, he resembles the courtesan on the other. The sex of his diabolical nature is double. It engenders and transforms itself. Would you see it in its pleasing shape? Look at it. Would you see it horrible? Turn it round.

All this multitude of ideas was floating

confusedly in Clubin's mind. He analyzed them little, but he felt them much.

A whirlwind of flakes of fire borne up from the pit of hell into the dark night, might fitly represent the wild succession of ideas in his soul.

Clubin remained thus some time pensive and motionless. He looked down upon his cast-off virtues as a serpent on its old skin.

Everybody had had faith in that virtue; even he himself a little.

He laughed again.

Society would imagine him dead, while he was rich. They would believe him drowned, while he was saved. What a capital trick to have played off on the stupidity of the world.

Rantaine, too, was included in that universal stupidity. Clubin thought of Rantaine with an unmeasured disdain: the disdain of the marten for the tiger. The trick had failed with Rantaine; it had succeeded with him.—Rantaine had slunk away abashed; Clubin disappeared in triumph. He had substituted himself for Rantaine—stepped between him and his mistress, and carried off her favors.

As to the future, he had no well-settled plan. In the iron tobacco-box in his girdle he had the three bank-notes. The knowledge of that fact was enough. He would change his name. There are plenty of countries where sixty thousand francs are equal to six hundred thousand. It would be no bad solution to go to one of those corners of the world, and live there honestly on the money disgorged by that scoundrel Rantaine. To speculate, to embark in commerce, to increase his capital, to become really a millionaire, that, too, would be no bad termination to his career.

For example. The great trade in coffee from Costa Rica was just beginning to be developed. There were heaps of gold to be made. He would see.

It was of little consequence. He had plenty of time to think of it. The hardest part of the enterprize was accomplished. Stripping Rantaine, and disappearing with the wreck of the *Durande*, were the grand achievements. All the rest was for him simple. No obstacle henceforth was likely

to stop him. He had nothing more to fear. He could reach the shore with certainty by swimming. He would land at Pleinmont in the darkness; ascend the cliffs; go straight to the old haunted house; enter it easily by the help of the knotted cord, concealed beforehand in a crevice of the rocks; would find in the house his travelling-bag containing provisions and dry clothing. There he could await his opportunity. He had information. A week would not pass without the Spanish smugglers, Blasquito probably, touching at Pienmont. For a few guineas he would obtain a passage, not to Torbay—as he had said to Blasco, to confound conjecture, and put him off the scent—but to Bilbao or Passages. Thence he could get to Vera Cruz or New Orleans. But the moment had come for taking to the water. The long boat was far enough by this time. An hour's swimming was nothing for Clubin. The distance of a mile only separated him from the land, as he was on the Hanways.

At this point in Clubin's meditations, a clear opening appeared in the fog bank, the formidable Douvres rocks stood before him.

VII.

AN UNEXPECTED DENOUEMENT.

CLUBIN, haggard, stared straight ahead.

It was indeed those terrible and solitary rocks.

It was impossible to mistake their misshapen outlines. The two twin Douvres reared their forms aloft, hideously revealing the passage between them, like a snare, a cut-throat in ambush in the ocean.

They were quite close to him. The fog, like an artful accomplice, had hidden them until now.

Clubin had mistaken his course in the dense mist. Notwithstanding all his pains, he had experienced the fate of two other great navigators, Gonzalez, who discovered Cape Blanco, and Fernandez, who discovered Cape Verd. The fog had bewildered him. It had seemed to him, in the confidence of his seamanship, to favor admirably the execution of his project; but it had

its perils. In veering to westward he had lost his reckoning. The Guernsey man, who fancied that he recognized the Hanways, had decided his fate, and determined him to give the final turn to the tiller. Clubin had never doubted that he had steered the vessel on the Hanways.

The Durande, stove in by one of the sunken rocks of the group, was only separated from the two Douvres by a few cables' lengths.

At two hundred fathoms further was a massive block of granite. Upon the steep sides of this rock were some hollows and small projections, which might help a man to climb. The square corners of those rude walls at right angles indicated the existence of a plateau on the summit.

It was the height known by the name of "The Man."

"The Man" rock rose even higher still than the Douvres. Its platform commanded a view over their two inaccessible peaks. This platform, crumbling at its edges, had every kind of irregularity of shape. No place more desolate or more dangerous could be imagined. The hardly perceptible waves of the open sea lapped gently against the square sides of that dark enormous mass; a sort of resting-place for the vast spectres of the sea and darkness.

All around was calm. Scarcely a breath of air or a ripple. The mind guessed darkly the hidden life and vastness of the depths beneath that quiet surface.

Clubin had often seen the Douvres from afar.

He satisfied himself that he was indeed there.

He could not doubt it.

A sudden and hideous change of affairs. The Douvres instead of the Hanways. Instead of one mile, five leagues of sea! The Douvres to the solitary shipwrecked sailor is the visible and palpable presence of death, the extinction of all hope of reaching land.

Clubin shuddered. He had placed himself voluntarily in the jaws of destruction. No other refuge was left to him than "The Man" rock. It was probable that a tempest would arise in the night, and

that the long boat, overloaded as she was, would sink. No news of the shipwreck then would come to land. It would not even be known that Clubin had been left upon the Douvres. No prospect was now before him but death from cold and hunger. His seventy-five thousand francs would not purchase him a mouthful of bread. All the scaffolding he had built up had brought him only to this snare. He alone was the laborious architect of this crowning catastrophe. No resource—no possible escape; his triumph transformed into a fatal precipice. Instead of deliverance, a prison; instead of the long prosperous future, agony. In the glance of an eye, in the moment which the lightning occupies in passing, all his construction had fallen into ruins. The paradise dreamed of by this demon had changed to its true form of a sepulchre.

Meanwhile there had sprung up a movement in the air. The wind was rising. The fog, shaken, driven in, and rent asunder, moved towards the horizon in vast shapeless masses. As quickly as it had disappeared before, the sea became once more visible.

The cattle, more and more invaded by the waters, continued to bellow in the hold.

Night was approaching, probably bringing with it a storm.

The *Durande*, filling slowly with the rising tide, swung from right to left, then from left to right, and began to turn upon the rock as upon a pivot.

The moment could be foreseen when a wave must move her from her fixed position, and probably roll her over on her beam-ends.

It was not even so dark as at the instant of her striking the rocks. Though the day was more advanced, it was possible to see more clearly. The fog had carried away with it some part of the darkness. The west was without a cloud. Twilight brings a pale sky. Its vast reflection glimmered on the sea.

The *Durande's* bows were lower than her stern. Her stern was, in fact, almost out of the water. Clubin mounted on the taffrail, and fixed his eyes on the horizon.

It is the nature of hypocrisy to be sanguine. The hypocrite is one who waits his opportunity. Hypocrisy is nothing, in fact, but a horrible hopefulness; the very foundation of its revolting falsehood is composed of that virtue transformed into a vice.

Strange contradiction. There is a certain trustfulness in hypocrisy. The hypocrite confides in some power, unrevealed even to himself, which permits the course of evil.

Clubin looked far and wide over the ocean.

The position was desperate, but that evil spirit did not yet despair.

He knew that after the fog, vessels that had been lying-to or riding at anchor would resume their course; and he thought that perhaps one would pass within the horizon.

And, as he had anticipated, a sail appeared.

She was coming from the east and steering towards the west.

As it approached, the cut of the vessel became visible. It had but one mast, and was schooner rigged. Her bowsprit was almost horizontal. It was a cutter.

Before a half-hour she must pass not very far from the Douvres.

Clubin said within himself, "I am saved!"

In a moment like this, a man thinks at first of nothing but his life.

The cutter was probably a strange craft. Might it not be one of the smuggling vessels on its way to Pleinmont? It might even be Blasquito himself. In that case, not only life, but fortune, would be saved; and the accident of the Douvres, by hastening the conclusion, by dispensing with the necessity for concealment in the haunted house, and by bringing the adventure to a dénouement at sea, would be turned into a happy incident.

All his original confidence of success returned fanatically to his sombre mind.

It is remarkable how easily knaves are persuaded that they deserve to succeed.

There was but one course to take.

The *Durande*, entangled among the rocks, necessarily mingled her outline

with them, and confounded herself with their irregular shapes, among which she formed only one more mass of lines. Thus become indistinct and lost, she would not suffice, in the little light which remained, to attract the attention of the crew of the vessel which was approaching.

But a human form standing up, black against the pale twilight of the sky, upon "the Man Rock," and making signs of distress, would doubtless be perceived, and the cutter would then send a boat to take the shipwrecked man aboard.

"The Man" was only two hundred fathoms off. To reach it by swimming was simple, to climb it easy.

There was not a minute to lose.

The bows of the *Durande* being low between the rocks, it was from the height of the poop where Clubin stood that he had to jump into the sea. He began by taking a sounding, and discovered that there was great depth just under the stern of the wrecked vessel. The microscopic shells of foraminifera which the adhesive matter on the lead-line brought up were intact, indicating the presence of very hollow caves under the rocks, in which the water was tranquil, however great the agitation of the surface.

He undressed, leaving his clothing on the deck. He knew that he would be able to get clothing when aboard the cutter.

He retained nothing but his leather belt.

As soon as he was stripped he placed his hand upon this belt, buckled it more securely, felt for the iron tobacco-box, took a rapid survey in the direction which he would have to follow among the breakers and the waves to gain "the Man Rock;" then precipitating himself head first, he plunged into the sea.

As he dived from a height, he plunged heavily.

He sank deep in the water, touched the bottom, skirted for a moment the submarine rocks, then struck out to regain the surface.

At that moment he felt himself seized by one foot.

BOOK VII.

THE DANGER OF OPENING A BOOK AT RANDOM.

I.

THE PEARL AT THE FOOT OF A PRECIPICE.

A FEW moments after his short colloquy with *Sieur Landoys*, *Gilliatt* was at *St. Sampson*.

He was troubled, even anxious. What could it be that had happened.

There was a murmur in *St. Sampson* like that of a startled hive. Everybody was at his door. The women were talking loud. There were people who seemed relating some occurrence and who were gesticulating. A group had gathered around them. The words could be heard, "What a misfortune!" Some faces wore a smile.

Gilliatt interrogated no one. It was not in his nature to ask questions. He was, moreover, too much moved to speak to strangers. He had no confidence in rumors. He preferred to go direct to the *Bravées*.

His anxiety was so great that he was not even deterred from entering the house.

The door of the great lower room opening upon the Quay, moreover, stood quite open. There was a swarm of men and women on the threshold. Everybody was going in, and *Gilliatt* went with the rest.

Entering he found *Sieur Landoys* standing near the door-posts.

"You have heard, no doubt, of this event?"

"No."

"I did not like to call it out to you on the road. It makes me like a bird of evil omen."

"What has happened?"

"The *Durande* is lost."

There was a crowd in the great room.

The various groups spoke low, like people in a sick chamber.

The assemblage, which consisted of neighbors, the first comers, curious to learn the news, huddled together near the

door with a sort of timidity, leaving clear the bottom of the room, where appeared Déruchette sitting and in tears. Mess Lethierry stood beside her.

His back was against the wall at the end of the room. His sailor's cap came down over his eyebrows. A lock of gray hair hung upon his cheek. He said nothing. His arms were motionless; he seemed scarcely to breathe. He had the look of something lifeless placed against the wall.

It was easy to see in his aspect, a man whose life had been crushed within him. The *Durande* being gone, Lethierry had no longer any object in his existence. He had had a being on the sea; that being had suddenly foundered. What could he do now? Rise every morning: go to sleep every night. Never more to await the coming of the *Durande*; to see her get under way, or steer again into the port. What was a remainder of existence without object? To drink, to eat, and then?—He had crowned the labors of his life by a masterpiece: won by his devotion a new step in civilization. The step was lost; the masterpiece destroyed. To live a few vacant years longer! where would be the good? Henceforth nothing was left for him to do. At his age men do not begin life anew. Besides, he was ruined. Poor old man!

Déruchette, sitting near him on a chair and weeping, held one of Mess Lethierry's hands in hers. Her hands were joined: his hand was clenched fast. It was the sign of the shade of difference in their two sorrows. In joined hands there is still some token of hope, in the clenched fist none.

Mess Lethierry gave up his arm to her, and let her do with it what she pleased. He was passive. Struck down by a thunderbolt, he had scarcely a spark of life left within him.

There is a degree of overwhelmment which abstracts the mind entirely from its fellowship with man. The forms which come and go within your room become confused and indistinct. They pass by, even touch you, but never really come near you. You are far away; inaccessible to them, as they to you. The intensities of joy and de-

spair differ in this. In despair, we take cognizance of the world only as something dim and afar off: we are insensible to the things before our eyes; we lose the feeling of our own existence. It is in vain, at such times, that we are flesh and blood; our consciousness of life is none the more real: we are become, even to ourselves, nothing but a dream.

Mess Lethierry's gaze indicated that he had reached this state of absorption.

The various groups were whispering together. They exchanged information as far as they had gathered it. This was the substance of their news.

The *Durande* had been wrecked the day before in the fog on the *Douvres*, about an hour before sunset. With the exception of the captain, who refused to leave his vessel, the crew and passengers had all escaped in the long boat. A squall from the south-west springing up as the fog had cleared, had almost wrecked them a second time, and had carried them out to sea beyond Guernsey. In the night they had had the good fortune to meet with the *Cashmere*, which had taken them aboard and landed them at St. Peter's Port. The disaster was entirely the fault of the steersman Tangrouille, who was in prison. Clubin had behaved nobly.

The pilots, who had mustered in great force, pronounced the words "*The Douvres*" with a peculiar emphasis. "A dreary half-way house, that," said one.

A compass and a bundle of registers and memorandum-books lay on the table; they were doubtless the compass of the *Durande* and the ship's papers, handed by Clubin to Imbrancam and Tangrouille at the moment of the departure of the long boat. They were the evidences of the magnificent self-abnegation of that man who had busied himself with saving these documents even in the presence of death itself—a little incident full of moral grandeur; an instance of sublime self-forgetfulness never to be forgotten.

They were unanimous in their admiration of Clubin; unanimous also in believing him to be saved after all. The *Shealtiel* cutter had arrived some hours after the *Cashmere*. It was this vessel which had

brought the last items of intelligence. She had passed four-and-twenty hours in the same waters as the *Durande*. She had lain-to in the fog, and tacked about during the squall. The captain of the *Shealtiel* was present among the company.

This captain had just finished his narrative to Lethierry as Gilliatt entered. The narrative was a true one. Towards the morning, the storm having abated, and the wind becoming manageable, the captain of the *Shealtiel* had heard the lowing of oxen in the open sea. This rural sound in the midst of the waves had naturally startled him. He steered in that direction, and perceived the *Durande* among the *Douvres*. The sea had sufficiently subsided for him to approach. He hailed the wreck; the bellowing of the cattle was the sole reply. The captain of the *Shealtiel* was confident that there was no one aboard the *Durande*. The wreck still held together well, and notwithstanding the violence of the squall, Clubin could have passed the night there. He was not the man to leave go his hold very easily. He was not there, however; and therefore he must have been rescued. It was certain that several sloops and luggers, from *Granville* and *St. Malo*, must, after laying-to in the fog on the previous evening, have passed pretty near the rocks. It was evident that one of these had taken Clubin aboard. It was to be remembered that the long boat of the *Durande* was full when it left the unlucky vessel; that it was certain to encounter great risks; that another man aboard would have overloaded her, and perhaps caused her to founder; and that these circumstances had no doubt weighed with Clubin in coming to his determination to remain on the wreck. His duty, however, once fulfilled, and a vessel at hand, Clubin assuredly would not have scrupled to avail himself of its aid. A hero is not necessarily an idiot. The idea of a suicide was absurd in connection with a man of Clubin's irreproachable character. The culprit, too, was *Tangrouille*, not Clubin. All this was conclusive. The captain of the *Shealtiel* was evidently right, and everybody expected to see Clubin reappear very

shortly. There was a project abroad to carry him through the town in triumph.

Two things appeared certain from the narrative of the captain: Clubin was saved, the *Durande* lost.

As regarded the *Durande*, there was nothing for it but to accept the fact; the catastrophe was irremediable. The captain of the *Shealtiel* had witnessed the last moments of the wreck. The sharp rock on which the vessel had been, as it were, nailed, had held her fast during the night, and resisted the shock of the tempest as if reluctant to part with its prey; but in the morning, at the moment when the captain of the *Shealtiel* had convinced himself that there was no one aboard to be saved, and was about to wear off again, one of those seas which are like the last angry blows of a tempest had struck her. The wave lifted her violently from her place, and with the swiftness and directness of an arrow from a bow had thrown her against the two *Douvres* Rocks. "An infernal crash was heard," said the captain. The vessel, lifted by the wave to a certain height, had plunged between the two rocks up to her midship frame. She had stuck fast again: but more firmly than on the submarine rocks. She must have remained there suspended, and exposed to every wind and sea.

The *Durande*, according to the statements of the crew of the *Shealtiel*, was already three parts broken up. She would evidently have foundered during the night, if the rocks had not kept her up. The captain of the *Shealtiel* had watched her a long time with his spy-glass. He gave, with naval precision, the details of her disaster. The starboard quarter beaten in, the masts maimed, the sails blown from the bolt-ropes, the shrouds torn away, the cabin sky-lights smashed by the falling of one of the booms, the dome of the cuddy-house beaten in, the chocks of the long boat struck away, the round-house overturned, the hinges of the rudder broken, the trusses wrenched away, the quarter cloths demolished, the bits gone, the cross-beam destroyed, the shear-rails knocked off, the stern-post broken. As to the parts of the cargo made fast before the foremast,

all destroyed, made a clean sweep of, gone to ten thousand shivers, with top ropes, iron pulleys, and chains. The *Durande* had broken her back; the sea now must break her up piecemeal. In a few days there would be nothing of her remaining.

It appeared that the engine was scarcely injured by all these ravages—a remarkable fact, and one which proved its excellence. The captain of the *Shealtiel* thought he could affirm that the crank had received no serious injury. The vessel's masts had given way, but the funnel had resisted everything. Only the iron guards of the captain's gangway were twisted; the paddle boxes had suffered, the frames were bruised, but the paddles had not a float missing. The machinery was intact. Such was the conviction of the captain of the *Shealtiel*. Imbrancam, the *ingénieur*, who was among the crowd, had the same conviction. The negro, more intelligent than many of his white companions, was proud of his engines. He lifted up his arms, opening the ten fingers of his black hands, and said to Lethierry, as he sat there silent, "Master, the machinery is alive still!"

The safety of Clubin seeming certain, and the hull of the *Durande* being already sacrificed, the engines became the topic of conversation among the crowd. They took an interest in it as in a living thing. They felt a delight in praising its good qualities. "That's what I call a well-built machine," said a French sailor. "Something like a good one," cried a Guernsey fisherman. "She must have some good stuff in her," said the captain of the *Shealtiel*, "to come out of that affair with only a few scratches."

By degrees the machinery of the *Durande* became the absorbing object of their thoughts. Opinions were warm for and against. It had its enemies and its friends. More than one who possessed a good old sailing cutter, and who hoped to get a share of the business of the *Durande*, was not sorry to find that the *Douvres* rock had disposed of the new invention. The whispering became louder. The discussion grew noisy, though the hubbub was evidently a little restrained; and now and

then there was a simultaneous lowering of voices out of respect to Lethierry's death-like silence.

The result of the colloquy, so obstinately maintained on all sides, was as follows:—

The engines were the vital part of the vessel. To rescue the *Durande* was impossible; but the machinery might still be saved. These engines were unique. To construct others similar, the money was wanting; but to find the artificer would have been still more difficult. It was remembered that the constructor of the machinery was dead. It had cost forty thousand francs. No one would risk again such a sum upon such a chance: particularly as it was now discovered that steamboats could be lost like other vessels. The accident of the *Durande* destroyed the prestige of all her previous success. Still, it was deplorable to think that at that very moment this valuable mechanism was still entire and in good condition, and that in five or six days it would probably go to pieces, like the vessel herself. As long as this existed, it might almost be said that there was no shipwreck. The loss of the engines was alone irreparable. To save the machinery would be almost to repair the disaster.

Save the machinery! It was easy to talk of it; but who would undertake to do it? Was it possible, even? To scheme and to execute are two different things; as different as to dream and to do. Now, if ever a dream had appeared wild and impracticable, it was that of saving the engines then embedded between the *Douvres*. The idea of sending a ship and a crew to work upon those rocks was absurd. It could not be thought of. It was the season of heavy seas. In the first gale the chains of the anchors would be worn away and snapped upon the submarine peaks, and the vessel must be shattered on the rocks. That would be to send a second shipwreck to the relief of the first. On the miserable narrow height where the legend of the place described the shipwrecked sailor as having perished of hunger, there was scarcely room for one person. To save the engines, there-

fore, it would be necessary for a man to go to the Douvres, to be alone in that sea, alone in that desert, alone at five leagues from the coast, alone in that region of terrors, alone for entire weeks, alone in the presence of dangers foreseen and unforeseen—without supplies in the face of hunger and nakedness, without succor in the time of distress, without token of human life around him save the bleached bones of the miserable being who had perished there in his misery, without companionship save that of death. And besides, how was it possible to extricate the machinery? It would require not only a sailor, but an engineer; and for what trials must he not prepare. The man who would attempt such a task must be more than a hero. He must be a madman: for in certain enterprises, in which superhuman power appears necessary, there is a sort of madness which is more potent than courage. And after all, would it not be a folly to immolate one's self for a mass of rusted iron. No: it was certain that nobody would undertake to go to the Douvres on such an errand. The engine must be abandoned like the rest. The engineer for such a task would assuredly not be forthcoming. Where, indeed, should they look for such a man?

All this, or similar observations, formed the substance of the confused conversations of the crowd.

The Captain of the Shealtiel, who had been a pilot, summed up the views of all by exclaiming aloud:—

“No; it is all over. The man does not exist who could go there and rescue the machinery of the *Durande*.”

“If I don't go,” said Imbrancam, “it is because nobody could do it.”

The captain of the Shealtiel shook his left hand in the air with that sudden movement which expresses a conviction that a thing is impossible.

“If he existed—” continued the captain.

Déruchette turned her head impulsively and interrupted.

“I would marry him,” she said, innocently.

There was a pause.

A man made his way out of the crowd, and standing before her, pale and anxious, said:

“You would marry him, Miss Déruchette?”

It was Gilliatt.

All eyes were turned towards him. Mess Lethierry had just before stood upright, and gazed about him. His eyes glittered with a strange light.

He took off his sailor's cap, and threw it on the ground: then looked solemnly before him, and without seeing any of the persons present, said:

“Déruchette should be his. I pledge myself to it in God's name.”

II.

MUCH ASTONISHMENT ON THE WESTERN COAST.

THE full moon rose at ten o'clock on the following night; but however fine the night, however favorable the wind and sea, no fisherman thought of going out that evening either from *Hegue la Perre*, or *Bourdeaux harbor*, or *Houmet Benet*, or *Platon*, or *Port Grat*, or *Vazon Bay*, or *Perrelle Bay*, or *Pezeries*, or the *Tielles* or *Saints' Bay*, or *Little Bo*, or any other port or little harbor in *Guernsey*; and the reason was very simple. A cock had been heard to crow at noonday.

When the cock is heard to crow at an extraordinary hour, fishing is suspended.

At dusk on that evening, however, a fisherman returning to *Omptholte*, met with a remarkable adventure. On the height above *Houmet Paradis*, beyond the *Two Brayes* and the *Two Grunes*, stands to the left the beacon of the *Plattes Tougères*, representing a tub reversed; and to the right, the beacon of *St. Sampson*, representing the face of a man. Between these two, the fisherman thought that he perceived for the first time a third beacon. What could be the meaning of this beacon? When had it been erected on that point? What shoal did it indicate? The beacon responded immediately to these interrogations. It moved, it was a mast. The astonishment of the fisher-

man did not diminish. A beacon would have been remarkable; a mast was still more so: it could not be a fishing-boat. When everybody else was returning, some boat was going out. Who could it be? and what was he about?

Ten minutes later the vessel, moving slowly, came within a short distance of the Omptolle fisherman. He did not recognize it. He heard the sound of rowing: there were evidently only two oars. There was probably, then, only one man aboard. The wind was northerly. The man, therefore, was evidently paddling along in order to take the wind off Point Fontenelle. There he would probably take to his sails. He intended then to double the Ancresse and Mount Crevel. What could that mean?

The vessel passed, the fisherman returned home. On that same night, at different hours, and at different points, various persons scattered and isolated on the western coast of Guernsey, observed certain facts.

As the Omptolle fisherman was mooring his bark, a carter of seaweed about half a mile off, whipping his horses along the lonely road from the Clôtures near the Druid stones, and in the neighborhood of the Martello Towers 6 and 7, saw far off at sea, in a part little frequented, because it requires much knowledge of the waters, and in the direction of North Rock and the Jablonneuse, a sail being hoisted. He paid little attention to the circumstance, not being a seaman, but a carter of seaweed.

Half-an-hour had perhaps elapsed since the carter had perceived this vessel, when a plasterer returning from his work in the town, and passing round Pelée Pool, found himself suddenly opposite a vessel sailing boldly among the rocks of the Quenon, the Rousse de Mer, and the Gripe de Rousse. The night was dark, but the sky was light over the sea, an effect common enough; and he could distinguish a great distance in every direction. There was no sail visible except this vessel.

A little lower, a gatherer of cray-fish, preparing his fish wells on the beach which separates Port Soif from the Port

Enfer, was puzzled to make out the movements of a vessel between the Boue Corneille and the Moubrette. The man must have been a good pilot, and in great haste to reach some destination, to risk his boat there.

Just as eight o'clock was striking at the Catel, the tavern-keeper at Cobo Bay observed with astonishment a sail out beyond the Boue du Jardin and the Grunettes, and very near the Susanne and the Western Grunes.

Not far from Cobo Bay, upon the solitary point of the Houmet of Vason Bay, two lovers were lingering, hesitating before they parted for the night. The young woman addressed the young man with the words, "I am not going because I don't care to stay with you: I've a great deal to do." Their farewell kiss was interrupted by a good sized sailing boat which passed very near them, making for the direction of the Messellettes.

Monsieur le Peyre des Norgiots, an inhabitant of Cotillon Pipet, was engaged about nine o'clock in the evening in examining a hole made by some trespassers in the hedge of his property called La Jennerotte, and his "*friquet* planted with trees." Even while ascertaining the amount of the damage, he could not help observing a fishing-boat audaciously making its way round the Crocq Point at that hour of night.

On the morrow of a tempest, when there is always some agitation upon the sea, that route was extremely unsafe. It was rash to choose it, at least, unless the steersman knew all the channels by heart.

At half-past nine o'clock, at L'Equerrier, a trawler carrying home his net stopped for a time to observe between Colombelle and the Souflesse something which looked like a boat. The boat was in a dangerous position. Sudden gusts of wind of a very dangerous kind are very common in that spot. The *Souflesse*, or Blower, derives its name from the sudden gusts of wind which it seems to direct upon the vessels, which by rare chance find their way thither.

At the moment when the moon was rising, the tide being high and the sea being

quiet, in the little strait of Li-Hou, the solitary keeper of the island of Li-Hou was considerably startled. A long black object slowly passed between the moon and him. This dark form, high and narrow, resembled a winding-sheet spread out and moving. It glided along the line of the top of the wall formed by the ridges of rock. The keeper of Li-Hou fancied that he had beheld the Black Lady.

The White Lady inhabits the *Tau de Pez d'Amont*; the Gray Lady, the *Tau de Pez d'Aval*; the Red Lady, the *Silleuse*, to the north of the *Marquis Bank*; and the Black Lady, the *Grand Etacré*, to the west of *Li-Houmet*. At night, when the moon shines, these ladies stalk abroad, and sometimes meet.

That dark form might undoubtedly be a sail. The long groups of rocks on which she appeared to be walking, might in fact be concealing the hull of a bark navigating behind them, and allowing only her sail to be seen. But the keeper asked himself, what bark would dare, at that hour, to venture herself between *Li-Hou* and the *Pécheresses*, and the *Anguilli ères* and *Lérée Point*? And what object could she have? It seemed to him much more probable that it was the Black Lady.

As the moon was passing the clock-tower of *St. Peter* in the *Wood*; the serjeant at *Castle Rocquaine*, while in the act of raising the drawbridge of the castle, distinguished at the end of the bay beyond the *Haute Canée*, but nearer than the *Sambule*, a sailing-vessel which seemed to be steadily dropping down from north to south.

On the southern coast of *Guernsey* behind *Pleinmont*, in the curve of a bay composed entirely of precipices and rocky walls rising peak-shaped from the sea, there is a singular landing-place, to which a French gentleman, a resident of the island since 1855, has given the name of "*The Port on the Fourth Floor*," a name now generally adopted. This port, or landing place, which was then called the *Moie*, is a rocky plateau half formed by nature, half by art, raised about forty feet above the level of the waves and communicating with the water by two large beams laid parallel in

the form of an inclined plane. The fishing vessels are hoisted up there by chains and pulleys from the sea, and are let down again in the same way along these beams, which are like two rails. For the fishermen there is a ladder. The port was, at the time of our story, much frequented by the smugglers. Being difficult of access, it was well suited to their purposes.

Towards eleven o'clock, some smugglers—perhaps the same upon whose aid *Clubin* had counted—stood with their bales of goods on the summit of this platform of the *Moie*. A smuggler is necessarily a man on the look-out, it is part of his business to watch. They were astonished to perceive a sail suddenly make its appearance beyond the dusky outline of *Cape Pleinmont*. It was moonlight. The smugglers observed the sail narrowly, suspecting that it might be some coast-guard cutter about to lie in ambush behind the *Great Hanway*. But the sail left the *Hanways* behind, passed to the north-west of the *Boue Blondel*, and was lost in the pale mists of the horizon out at sea.

"Where the devil can that boat be sailing?" asked the smuggler.

That same evening, a little after sunset, some one had been heard knocking at the door of the old house of the *Bû de la Rue*. It was a boy wearing brown clothes and yellow stockings, a fact that indicated that he was a little parish clerk. An old fisherwoman prowling about the shore with a lantern in her hand, had called to the boy, and this dialogue ensued between the fisherwoman and the little clerk, before the entrance to the *Bû de la Rue*:—

"What d'ye want, lad?"

"The man of this place."

"He's not there."

"Where is he?"

"I don't know."

"Will he be there to-morrow?"

"I don't know."

"Is he gone away?"

"I don't know?"

"I've come, good woman, from the new rector of the parish, the Reverend *Ebenezer Caudray*, who desires to pay him a visit."

"I don't know where he is."

"The rector sent me to ask if the man who lives at the Bû de la Rue would be at home to-morrow morning."

"I don't know."

III.

A QUOTATION FROM THE BIBLE.

DURING the twenty-four hours which followed, Mess Lethierry slept not, eat nothing, drank nothing. He kissed Déruchette on the forehead, asked after Clubin, of whom there was as yet no news, signed a declaration certifying that he had no intention of preferring a charge against any one, and set Tangrouille at liberty.

All the morning of the next day he remained half supporting himself on the table of the office of the Durande, neither standing nor sitting: answering kindly when any one spoke to him. Curiosity being satisfied, the Bravées had become a solitude. There is a good deal of curiosity generally mingled with the haste of condolences. The door had closed again, and left the old man again alone with Déruchette. The strange light that had shone in Lethierry's eyes was extinguished. The mournful look which filled them after the first news of the disaster had returned.

Déruchette, anxious for his sake, had, on the advice of Grace and Douce, laid silently beside him a pair of stockings, which he had been knitting, sailor fashion, when the bad news had arrived.

He smiled bitterly, and said :

"They must think me foolish."

After a quarter of an hour's silence, he added :

"These things are well when you are happy."

Déruchette carried away the stockings, and took advantage of the opportunity to remove also the compass and the ship's papers which Lethierry had been brooding over too long.

In the afternoon, a little before tea-time, the door opened and two strangers entered, attired in black. One was old, the other young.

The young one has, perhaps, already been observed in the course of this story.

The two men had each a grave air; but

their gravity appeared different. The old man possessed what might be called state gravity; the gravity of the young man was in his nature. Habit engenders the one; thought the other.

They were, as their costume indicated, two clergymen, each belonging to the Established Church.

The first fact in the appearance of the younger man which might have first struck the observer was, that his gravity, though conspicuous in the expression of his features, and evidently springing from the mind, was not indicated by his person. Gravity is not inconsistent with passion, which it exalts by purifying it; but the idea of gravity could with difficulty be associated with an exterior remarkable above all for personal beauty. Being in holy orders, he must have been at least four-and-twenty, but he seemed scarcely more than eighteen. He possessed those gifts at once in harmony with, and in opposition to, each other. A soul which seemed created for exalted passion, and a body created for love. He was fair, rosy-fresh, slim, and elegant in his severe attire, and he had the cheeks of a young girl, and delicate hands. His movements were natural and lively, though subdued. Everything about him was pleasing, elegant, almost voluptuous. The beauty of his expression served to correct this excess of personal attraction. His open smile, which showed his teeth, regular and white as those of a child, had something in it pensive, even devotional. He had the gracefulness of a page, mingled with the dignity of a bishop.

His fair hair, so fair and golden as to be almost effeminate, clustered over his white forehead, which was high and well-formed. A slight double line between the eyebrows awakened associations with studious thought.

Those who saw him felt themselves in the presence of one of those natures, benevolent, innocent, and pure, whose progress is in inverse sense with that of vulgar minds; natures whom illusion renders wise, and whom experience makes enthusiasts.

His older companion was no other than

Doctor Jaquemin Hérode. Doctor Jaquemin Hérode belonged to the High Church; a party whose system is a sort of popery without a pope. The Church of England was at that epoch laboring with the tendencies which have since become strengthened and condensed in the form of Puseyism. Doctor Jaquemin Hérode belonged to that shade of Anglicanism which is almost a variety of the Church of Rome. He was haughty, precise, stiff, and commanding. His inner sight scarcely penetrated outwardly. He possessed the letter in the place of the spirit. His manner was arrogant; his presence imposing. He had less the appearance of a "Reverend" than of a *Monsignore*. His frock-coat was cut somewhat in the fashion of a cassock. His true centre would have been Rome. He was a born Prelate of the Antechamber. He seemed to have been created expressly to fill a part in the Papal Court, to walk behind the Pontifical litter, with all the Court of Rome in *abitto paonazzo*. The accident of his English birth and his theological education, directed more towards the Old than the New Testament, had deprived him of that destiny. All his splendors were comprised in his preferments as Rector of St. Peter's Port, Dean of the Island of Guernsey, and Surrogate of the Bishop of Winchester. These were, undoubtedly, not without their glories. These glories did not prevent M. Jaquemin Hérode being, on the whole, a worthy man.

As a theologian he was esteemed by those who were able to judge of such matters; he was almost an authority in the Court of Arches—that Sorbonne of England.

He had the true air of erudition; a learned contraction of the eyes; bristling nostrils; teeth which showed themselves at all times; a thin upper lip and a thick lower one. He was the possessor of several learned degrees, a valuable prebend, titled friends, the confidence of the bishop, and a Bible which he carried always in his pocket.

Mess Lethierry was so completely absorbed that the entrance of the two

priests produced no effect upon him, save a slight movement of the eyebrows.

M. Jaquemin Hérode advanced, bowed, alluded in a few sober and dignified words to his recent promotion, and mentioned that he came according to custom to introduce among the inhabitants, and to Mess Lethierry in particular, his successor in the parish, the new Rector of St. Sampson, the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray, henceforth the pastor of Mess Lethierry.

Déruchette rose.

The young clergyman, who was the Rev. Ebenezer, saluted her.

Mess Lethierry regarded Monsieur Ebenezer Caudray, and muttered, "A bad sailor."

Grace placed chairs. The two visitors seated themselves near the table.

Doctor Hérode commenced a discourse. It had reached his ears that a serious misfortune had befallen his host. The *Durande* had been lost. He came as Lethierry's pastor to offer condolence and advice. This shipwreck was unfortunate, and yet not without compensations. Let us examine our own hearts. Are we not puffed up with prosperity? The waters of felicity are dangerous. Troubles must be submitted to cheerfully. The ways of Providence are mysterious. Mess Lethierry was ruined, perhaps. But riches were a danger. You may have false friends; poverty will disperse them, and leave you alone. The *Durande* was reported to have brought a revenue of one thousand pounds sterling per annum. It was more than enough for the wise. Let us fly from temptations; put not our faith in gold; bow the head to losses and neglect. Isolation is full of good fruits. It was in solitude that Ajah discovered the warm springs while leading the asses of his father Zibeon. Let us not rebel against the inscrutable decrees of Providence. The holy man Job, after his misery, had put faith in riches. Who can say that the loss of the *Durande* may not have its advantages even of a temporal kind. He, for instance, Doctor Jaquemin Hérode, had invested some money in an excellent enterprise, now in progress at Sheffield. If Mess Lethierry, with the wealth which

might still remain to him, should choose to embark in the same affair, he might transfer his capital to that town. It was an extensive manufactory of arms for the supply of the Czar, now engaged in repressing insurrection in Poland. There was a good prospect of obtaining three hundred per cent. profit.

The word Czar appeared to awaken Lethierry. He interrupted Dr. Hérode.

"I want nothing to do with the Czar."

The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode replied :

"Mess Lethierry, princes are recognized by God. It is written, 'Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's.' The Czar is Cæsar."

Lethierry partly relapsed into his dream and muttered :

"Cæsar? who is Cæsar? I don't know."

The Rev. Jaquemin Hérode continued his exhortations. He did not press the question of Sheffield.

To condemn a Cæsar was republicanism. He could understand a man being a republican. In that case he could turn his thoughts towards a republic. Mess Lethierry might repair his fortune in the United States, even better than in England. If he desired to invest what remained to him at great profit, he had only to take shares in the great company for developing the resources of Texas, which employed more than twenty thousand negroes.

"I want nothing to do with slavery," said Lethierry.

"Slavery," replied the Reverend Hérode, "is an institution recognized by Scripture. It is written, 'If a man smite his slave, he shall not be punished, for he is his money.'"

Grace and Douce at the door of the room listened in a sort of ecstasy to the words of the Reverend Doctor.

The Doctor continued. He was, all things considered, as we have said, a worthy man; and whatever his differences, personal or connected with caste, with Mess Lethierry, he had come very sincerely to offer him that spiritual and even temporal aid which he, Doctor Jaquemin Hérode, dispensed.

If Mess Lethierry's fortune had been

diminished to that point that he was unable to take a beneficial part in any speculation, Russian or American, why should he not obtain some government appointment suited to him? There were many very respectable places open to him, and the reverend gentleman was ready to recommend him. The office of Deputy-Vicomte was just vacant. Mess Lethierry was popular and respected, and the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, Dean of Guernsey and Surrogate of the Bishop, would make an effort to obtain for Mess Lethierry this post. The Deputy-Vicomte is an important officer. He is present as the representative of His Majesty at the holding of the Sessions, at the debates of the *Cohue*, and at executions of justice.

Lethierry fixed his eye upon Doctor Hérode.

"I don't like hanging," he said.

Doctor Hérode, who, up to this point, had pronounced his words with the same intonation, had now a fit of severity; his tone became slightly changed.

"Mess Lethierry, the pain of death is of divine ordination. God has placed the sword in the hands of governors. It is written, 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.'"

The Reverend Ebenezer imperceptibly drew his chair nearer to the Reverend Doctor and said, so as to be heard only by him :

"What this man says, is dictated to him."

"By whom? By what?" demanded the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, in the same tone.

The young man replied in a whisper, "By his conscience."

The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode felt in his pocket, drew out a thick little bound volume with clasps, and said aloud :

"Conscience is here."

The book was a Bible.

Then Doctor Hérode's tone became softer. "His wish was to render a service to Mess Lethierry, whom he respected much. As his pastor, it was his right and duty to offer counsel. Mess Lethierry, however, was free."

Mess Lethierry, plunged once more in

his overwhelming absorption, no longer listened. Déruchette, seated near him, and thoughtful, also did not raise her eyes, and by her silent presence somewhat increased the embarrassment of a conversation not very animated. A witness who says nothing is a species of indefinable weight. Doctor Hérode, however, did not appear to feel it.

Lethierry no longer replying, Doctor Hérode expatiated freely. "Counsel is from man; inspiration is from God. In the counsels of the priests there is inspiration. It is good to accept, dangerous to refuse them. Sochoh was seized by eleven devils for disdaining the exhortations of Nathaniel. Tiburianus was struck with a leprosy for having driven from his house the Apostle Andrew. Barjesus, a magician though he was, was punished with blindness for having mocked at the words of St. Paul. Elxai and his sisters, Martha and Martena, are in eternal torments for despising the warnings of Valentianus, who proved to them clearly that their Jesus Christ, thirty-eight leagues in height, was a demon. Aholibamah, who is also called Judith, obeyed the Councils, Reuben and Peniel listened to the counsels from on high, as their names indeed indicate. Reuben signifies son of the vision; and Peniel, the face of God."

Mess Lethierry struck the table with his fist.

"Parbleu!" he cried; "it was my fault."

"What do you mean?" asked M. Jaquemin Hérode.

"I say that it is my fault."

"Your fault? Why?"

"Because I allowed the Durande to return on Fridays."

M. Jaquemin Hérode whispered in Caudray's ear:

"This man is superstitious."

He resumed, raising his voice, and in a didactic tone.

"Mess Lethierry, it is puerile to believe in Fridays. You ought not to put faith in fables. Friday is a day just like any other. It is very often a propitious day. Melendez founded the city of St. Augustin on a Friday; it was on a Friday that Henry the Seventh gave his commission

to John Cabot; the Pilgrims of the 'Mayflower' landed at Province Town on a Friday. Washington was born on Friday, the 22d of February, 1732; Christopher Columbus discovered America on Friday, the 12th of October, 1492."

Having delivered himself of these remarks, he rose.

Caudray, whom he had brought with him, rose also.

Grace and Douce, perceiving that the two clergymen were about to take their leave, opened the folding-doors.

Mess Lethierry saw nothing; heard nothing.

M. Jaquemin Hérode said apart to M. Caudray:

"He does not even salute us. This is not sorrow; it is vacancy. He must have lost his reason."

He took his little Bible, however, from the table, and held it between his hands outstretched, as one holds a bird in fear that it may fly away. This attitude awakened among the persons present a certain amount of attention. Grace and Douce leaned forward eagerly.

His voice assumed all the solemnity of which it was capable.

"Mess Lethierry," he began, "let us not part without reading a page of the Holy Book. It is from books that wise men derive consolation in the troubles of life. The profane have their oracles; but believers have their ready resource in the Bible. The first book which comes to hand, opened by chance, may afford counsel; but the Bible, opened at any page, yields a revelation. It is, above all, a boon to the afflicted. Yes, Holy Scripture is an unfailing balm for their wounds. In the presence of affliction, it is good to consult its sacred pages—to open even without choosing the place, and to read with faith the passage which we find. What man does not choose is chosen by God. He knoweth best what suiteth us. His finger pointeth invisibly to that which we read. Whatever be the page, it will infallibly enlighten. Let us seek, then, no other light; but hold fast to His. It is the word from on high. In the text which is evoked with confidence and reverence, often do we

find a mysterious significance in our present troubles. Let us hearken, then, and obey. Mess Lethierry, you are in affliction, but I hold here the book of consolation. You are sick at heart, but I have here the book of spiritual health."

The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode touched the spring of the clasp, and let his finger slip between the leaves. Then he placed his hand a moment upon the open volume, collected his thoughts, and, raising his eyes impressively, began to read in a loud voice.

The passage which he had lighted on was as follows:

"And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the even-tide, and he lifted up his eyes and saw and beheld the camels were coming.

"And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she lighted off the camel.

"For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us?

"And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."

Caudray and Déruchette glanced at each other.

SECOND PART.

BOOK I.

MALICIOUS GILLIATT.

I.

THE PLACE WHICH IS EASY TO REACH,
BUT DIFFICULT TO LEAVE AGAIN.

THE bark which had been observed at so many points on the coast of Guernsey on the previous evening was, as the reader has guessed, the old Dutch barge or sloop. Gilliatt had chosen the channel along the coast among the rocks. It was the most

dangerous way, but it was the most direct. To take the shortest route was his only thought. Shipwrecks will not wait; the sea is a pressing creditor; an hour's delay may be irreparable. His anxiety was to go quickly to the rescue of the machinery in danger.

One of his objects in leaving Guernsey was to avoid arousing attention. He set out like one escaping from justice, and seemed anxious to hide from human eyes. He shunned the eastern coast, as if he did not care to pass in sight of St. Sampson and St. Peter's Port, and glided silently along the opposite coast, which is comparatively uninhabited. Among the breakers, it was necessary to ply the oars; but Gilliatt managed them on scientific principles; taking the water quietly, and dropping it with exact regularity, he was able to move in the darkness with as little noise and as rapidly as possible. So stealthy were his movements, that he might have seemed to be bent upon some evil errand.

In truth, though embarking desperately in an enterprise which might well be called impossible, and risking his life with nearly every chance against him, he feared nothing but the possibility of some rival in the work which he had set before him.

As the day began to break, those unknown eyes which look down upon the world from boundless space might have beheld, at one of the most dangerous and solitary spots at sea, two objects, the distance between which was gradually decreasing, as the one was approaching the other. One, which was almost imperceptible in the wide movement of the waters, was a sailing boat. In this was a man. It was the sloop. The other, black, motionless, colossal, rose above the waves, a singular form. Two tall pillars issuing from the sea bore aloft a sort of cross-beam which was like a bridge between them. This bridge, so singular in shape that it was impossible to imagine what it was from a distance, touched each of the two pillars. It resembled a vast portal. Of what use could such an erection be in that open plain, the sea, which stretched around it far and wide? It might have been imagined to be a Titanic Cromlech, planted

there in mid-ocean by an imperious whim, and built up by hands accustomed to proportion their labors to the great deep. Its wild outline stood well-defined against the clear sky.

The morning light was growing stronger in the east; the whiteness in the horizon deepened the shadow on the sea. In the opposite sky the moon was sinking.

The two perpendicular forms were the Douvres. The huge mass held fast between them, like an architrave between two pillars, was the wreck of the *Durande*.

The rock, thus holding fast and exhibiting its prey, was terrible to behold. Inanimate things look sometimes as if endowed with a dark and hostile spirit towards man. There was a menace in the attitude of the rocks. They seemed to be biding their time.

Nothing could be more suggestive of haughtiness and arrogance than their whole appearance: the conquered vessel; the triumphant abyss. The two rocks, still streaming with the tempest of the day before, were like two wrestlers sweating from a recent struggle. The wind had sunk; the sea rippled gently; here and there the presence of breakers might be detected in the graceful streaks of foam upon the surface of the waters. A sound came from the sea like the murmuring of bees. All around was level except the Douvres, rising straight, like two black columns. Up to a certain height they were completely bearded with seaweed; above this their steep haunches glittered at points like polished armor. They seemed ready to commence the strife again. The beholder felt that they were rooted deep in mountains whose summits were beneath the sea. Their aspect was full of a sort of tragic power.

Ordinarily the sea conceals her crimes. She delights in privacy. Her unfathomable deeps keep silence. She wraps herself in a mystery which rarely consents to give up its secrets. We know her savage nature, but who can tell the extent of her dark deeds? She is at once open and secret; she hides away carefully, and cares not to divulge her actions; wrecks a vessel, and, covering it with the waves,

engulfs it deep as if conscious of her guilt. Among her crimes is hypocrisy. She slays and steals, conceals her booty, puts on an air of unconsciousness, and smiles.

Here, however, was nothing of the kind. The Douvres, lifting above the level of the waters the shattered hull of the *Durande*, had an air of triumph. The imagination might have pictured them as two monstrous arms, reaching upwards from the gulf, and exhibiting to the tempest the lifeless body of the ship. Their aspect was like that of an assassin boasting of his evil deeds.

The solemnity of the hour contributed something to the impression of the scene. There is a mysterious grandeur in the dawn, as of the border-land between the region of consciousness and the world of our dreams. There is something spectral in that confused transition time. The immense form of the two Douvres, like a capital letter H, the *Durande* forming its cross-stroke, appeared against the horizon in all their twilight majesty.

Gilliatt was attired in his seaman's clothing: a Guernsey shirt, woollen stockings, thick shoes, a homespun jacket, trousers of thick stuff with pockets, and a cap upon his head of red worsted, of a kind then much in use among sailors, and known in the last century as a *galérienne*.

He recognized the rocks, and steered towards them.

The situation of the *Durande* was exactly the contrary of that of a vessel gone to the bottom: it was a vessel suspended in the air.

No problem more strange was ever presented to a salvor.

It was broad daylight when Gilliatt arrived in the waters about the rock.

As we have said, there was but little sea. The slight agitation of the water was due almost entirely to its confinement among the rocks. Every passage, small or large, is subject to this chopping movement. The inside of a channel is always more or less white with foam. Gilliatt did not approach the Douvres without caution.

He cast the sounding-lead several times.

He had a cargo to disembark.

Accustomed to long absences, he had at home a number of necessities always ready. He had brought a sack of biscuit, another of rye-meal, a basket of salt fish and smoked beef, a large can of fresh water; a Norwegian chest painted with flowers, containing several coarse woollen shirts, his tarpaulin and his water-proof overalls, and a sheepskin which he was accustomed to throw at night over his clothes. On leaving the *Bû de la Rue*, he had put all these things hastily into the barge, with the addition of a large loaf. In his hurry he had brought no other tools but his huge forge-hammer, his chopper and hatchet, and a knotted rope. Furnished with a grappling-iron and with a ladder of that sort, the steepest rocks become accessible, and a good sailor will find it possible to scale the rudest escarpment. In the island of Sark the visitor may see what the fishermen of the Havre Gosselin can accomplish with a knotted cord.

His nets and lines and all his fishing apparatus were in the barge. He had placed them there mechanically and by habit; for he intended, if his enterprise continued, to sojourn for some time in an archipelago of rocks and breakers, where fishing nets and tackle are of little use.

At the moment when Gilliatt was skirting the great rock the sea was retiring; a circumstance favorable to his purpose. The departing tide laid bare, at the foot of the smaller *Douvre*, one or two table-rocks, horizontal, or only slightly inclined, and bearing a fanciful resemblance to boards supported by crows. These table-rocks, sometimes narrow, sometimes broad, standing at unequal distances along the side of the great perpendicular column, were continued in the form of a thin cornice up to a spot just beneath the *Durande*, the hull of which stood swelling out between the two rocks. The wreck was held fast there as in a vice.

This series of platforms was convenient for approaching and surveying the position. It was convenient also for

disembarking the contents of the barge provisionally; but it was necessary to hasten, for it was only above water for a few hours. With the rising tide the table-rocks would be again beneath the foam.

It was before these table-rocks, some level, some slanting, that Gilliatt pushed in and brought the barge to a stand. A thick mass of wet and slippery sea-wrack covered them, rendered more slippery here and there by their inclined surfaces.

Gilliatt pulled off his shoes and sprang naked-footed on to the slimy weeds, and made fast the barge to a point of rock.

Then he advanced as far as he could along the granite cornice, reached the rock immediately beneath the wreck, looked up, and examined it.

The *Durande* had been caught suspended, and as it were fitted in between the two rocks, at about twenty feet above the water. It must have been a heavy sea which had cast her there.

Such effects from furious seas have nothing surprising for those who are familiar with the ocean. To cite one example only:—On the 25th January, 1840, in the Gulf of Stora, a tempest struck with its expiring force a brig, and casting it almost intact completely over the broken wreck of the corvette "*La Marne*," fixed it immovable, bowsprit first, in a gap between the cliffs.

The *Douvres*, however, held only a part of the *Durande*.

The vessel snatched from the waves had been, as it were, uprooted from the waters by the hurricane. A whirlwind had wrenched it against the counteracting force of the rolling waves, and the vessel thus caught in contrary directions by the two claws of the tempest had snapped like a lath. The after-part, with the engine and the paddles, lifted out of the foam and driven by all the fury of the cyclone into the defile of the *Douvres*, had plunged in up to her midship beam, and remained there. The blow had been well directed. To drive it in this fashion between the two rocks, the storm had struck it as with an enormous hammer. The fore-castle, carried away and rolled down by the sea, had gone to fragments among the breakers.

The hold, broken in, had scattered out the bodies of the drowned cattle upon the sea.

A large portion of the forward side and bulwarks still hung to the riders by the larboard paddle-box, and by some shattered braces easy to strike off with the blow of a hatchet.

Here and there, among beams, planks, rags of canvas, pieces of chains, and other remains of wreck were seen lying about among the rugged fragments of shattered rock.

Gilliatt surveyed the *Durande* attentively. The keel formed a roofing over his head.

A serene sky stretched far and wide over the waters, scarcely wrinkled with a passing breath. The sun rose gloriously in the midst of the vast azure circle.

From time to time a drop of water was detached from the wreck and fell into the sea.

II.

A CATALOGUE OF DISASTERS.

THE *Douvres* differed in shape as well as in height.

Upon the Little *Douvre*, which was curved and pointed, long veins of reddish-colored rock, of a comparatively soft kind, could be seen branching out and dividing the interior of the granite. At the edges of these red dykes were fractures, favorable to climbing. One of these fractures, situated a little above the wreck, had been so laboriously worn and scooped out by the splashing of the waves, that it had become a sort of niche, in which it would have been quite possible to place a statue. The granite of the Little *Douvre* was rounded at the surface, and, to the feel at least, soft like touchstone; but this feeling detracted nothing from its durability. The Little *Douvre* terminated in a point like a horn. The Great *Douvre*, polished, smooth, glossy, perpendicular, and looking as if cut out by the boulder's square, was in one piece, and seemed made of black ivory. Not a hole, not a break in its smooth surface. The escarpment looked inhospitable. A convict could not have

used it for escape, nor a bird for a place for its nest. On its summit there was a horizontal surface as upon "The Man Rock;" but the summit of the Great *Douvre* was inaccessible.

It was possible to scale the Little *Douvre*, but not to remain on the summit; it would have been possible to rest on the summit of the Great *Douvre*, but impossible to scale it.

Gilliatt, having rapidly surveyed the situation of affairs, returned to the barge, landed its contents upon the largest of the horizontal cornice rocks, made of the whole compact mass a sort of bale, which he rolled up in tarpaulin, fitted a sling rope to it with a hoisting block, pushed the package into a corner of the rocks where the waves could not reach it, and then clutching the Little *Douvre* with his hands, and holding on with his naked feet, he clambered from projection to projection, and from niche to niche, until he found himself level with the wrecked vessel high up in the air.

Having reached the height of the paddles, he sprang upon the poop.

The interior of the wreck presented a mournful aspect.

Traces of a great struggle were everywhere visible. There were plainly to be seen the frightful ravages of the sea and wind. The action of the tempest resembles the violence of a band of pirates. Nothing is more like the victim of a criminal outrage than a wrecked ship violated and stripped by those terrible accomplices, the storm-cloud, the thunder, the rain, the squall, the waves, and the breakers.

Standing upon the dismantled deck, it was natural to dream of the presence of something like a furious stamping of the spirits of the storm. Everywhere around were the marks of their rage. The strange contortions of certain portions of the iron-work bore testimony to the terrific force of the winds. The between-decks were like the cell of a lunatic in which everything has been broken.

No wild beast can compare with the sea for mangling its prey. The waves are full of talons. The north wind bites, the

billows devour, the waves are like hungry jaws. The ocean strikes like a lion with its heavy paw, seizing and dismembering at the same moment.

The ruin conspicuous in the *Durande* presented the peculiarity of being detailed and minute. It was a sort of horrible stripping and plucking. Much of it seemed done with design. The beholder was tempted to exclaim, "What wanton mischief!" The ripping of the planking was edged here and there artistically. This peculiarity is common with the ravages of the cyclone. To chip and tear away is the caprice of the great devastator. Its ways are like those of the professional torturer. The disasters which it causes wear a look of ingenious punishments. One might fancy it actuated by the worst passions of man. It refines in cruelty like a savage. While it is exterminating it dissects bone by bone. It torments its victim, avenges itself, and takes delight in its work. It even appears to descend to petty acts of malice.

Cyclones are rare in our latitudes, and are, for that reason, the more dangerous, being generally unexpected. A rock in the path of a heavy wind may become the pivot of a storm. It is probable that the squall had thus rotated upon the point of the *Douvres*, and had turned suddenly into a waterspout on meeting the shock of the rocks, a fact which explained the casting of the vessel so high among them. When the cyclone blows, a vessel is of no more weight in the wind than a stone in a sling.

The damage received by the *Durande* was like the wound of a man cut in twain. It was a divided trunk from which issued a mass of *débris* like the entrails of a body. Various kinds of cordage hung floating and trembling, chains swung chattering; the fibres and nerves of the vessel were there naked and exposed. What was not smashed was disjointed.

Fragments of the sheeting resembled currycombs bristling with nails; everything bore the appearance of ruin; a handspike had become nothing but a piece of iron; a sounding-lead, nothing but a lump of metal; a dead-eye had become a

mere piece of wood; a halliard, an end of rope; a strand of cord, a tangled skein; a bolt-rope, a thread in the hem of a sail. All around was the lamentable work of demolition. Nothing remained that was not unhooked, unnailed, cracked, wasted, warped, pierced with holes, destroyed: nothing hung together in the dreadful mass, but all was torn, dislocated, broken. There was that air of drift which characterizes the scene of all struggles—from the *melées* of men, which are called battles, to the *melées* of the elements, to which we give the name of chaos. Everything was sinking and dropping away; a rolling mass of planks, panelling, iron-work, cables, and beams had been arrested just at the great fracture of the hull, whence the least additional shock must have precipitated them into the sea. What remained of her powerful frame, once so triumphant, was cracked here and there, showing through large apertures the dismal gloom within.

The foam from below spat its flakes contemptuously upon this broken and forlorn outcast of the sea.

III.

SOUND; BUT NOT SAFE.

GILLIATT did not expect to find only a portion of the ship existing. Nothing in the description, in other respects so precise, of the captain of the *Shealtiel* had led him to anticipate this division of the vessel in the centre. It was probable that the "diabolical crash" heard by the captain of the *Shealtiel* marked the moment when this destruction had taken place under the blows of a tremendous sea. The captain had, doubtless, worn ship just before this last heavy squall; and what he had taken for a great sea was probably a waterspout. Later, when he drew nearer to observe the wreck, he had only been able to see the stern of the vessel—the remainder, that is to say, the large opening where the forepart had given way, having been concealed from him among the masses of rock.

With that exception, the information

given by the captain of the *Shealtiel* was strictly correct. The hull was useless, but the engine remained intact.

Such chances are common in the history of shipwreck: The logic of disaster at sea is beyond the grasp of human science.

The masts having snapped short, had fallen over the side; the chimney was not even bent. The great iron plating which supported the machinery had kept it together, and in one piece. The planks of the paddle-boxes were disjointed, like the leaves of wooden sunblinds; but through their apertures the paddles themselves could be seen in good condition. A few of their floats only were missing.

Besides the machinery, the great stern capstan had resisted the destruction. Its chain was there, and, thanks to its firm fixture in a frame of joists, might still be of service, unless the strain of the voyal should break away the planking. The flooring of the deck bent at almost every point, and was tottering throughout.

On the other hand, the trunk of the hull, fixed between the *Douvres*, held together, as we have already said, and it appeared strong.

There was something like derision in this preservation of the machinery; something which added to the irony of the misfortune. The sombre malice of the unseen powers of mischief displays itself sometimes in such bitter mockeries. The machinery was saved, but its preservation did not make it any the less lost. The ocean seemed to have kept it only to demolish it at leisure. It was like the playing of the cat with her prey.

Its fate was to suffer there and to be dismembered day by day. It was to be the plaything of the savage amusements of the sea. It was slowly to dwindle, and, as it were, to melt away. For what could be done? That this vast block of mechanism and gear, at once massive and delicate, condemned to fixity by its weight, delivered up in that solitude to the destructive elements, exposed in the gripe of the rock to the action of the wind and wave, could, under the frown of that implacable spot, escape from slow destruction, seemed a madness even to imagine.

The *Durande* was the captive of the *Douvres*.

How could she be extricated from that position?

How could she be delivered from her bondage?

The escape of a man is difficult; but what a problem was this—the escape of a vast and cumbrous machine.

IV.

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY.

GILLIATT was pressed on all sides by demands upon his labors. The most pressing, however, was to find a safe mooring for the barge; then a shelter for himself.

The *Durande* having settled down more on the larboard than on the starboard side, the right paddle-box was higher than the left.

Gilliatt ascended the paddle-box on the right. From that position, although the gut of rocks stretching in abrupt angles behind the *Douvres* had several elbows, he was able to study the ground-plan of the group.

This survey was the preliminary step of his operations.

The *Douvres*, as we have already described them, were like two high-gable ends, forming the narrow entrance to a straggling alley of small cliffs with perpendicular faces. It is not rare to find in primitive submarine formations these singular kinds of passages, which seem cut out with a hatchet.

This defile was extremely tortuous, and was never without water even in the low tides. A current, much agitated, traversed it at all times from end to end. The sharpness of its turnings was favorable or unfavorable, according to the nature of the prevailing wind; sometimes it broke the swell and caused it to fall; sometimes it exasperated it. This latter effect was the most frequent. An obstacle arouses the anger of the sea, and pushes it to excesses. The foam is the exaggeration of the waves.

The two chains of rocks, leaving between them this kind of street in the sea, formed stages at a lower level than the *Douvres*,

gradually decreasing, until they sunk together at a certain distance beneath the waves.

The stormy winds in these narrow and tortuous passages between the rocks are subjected to a similar compression, and acquire the same malignant character. The tempest frets in its sudden imprisonment. Its bulk is still immense, but sharpened and contracted; and it strikes with the massiveness of a huge club and the keenness of an arrow. It pierces even while it strikes down. It is a hurricane contracted, like the draught through the crevice of a door.

There was another such gullet of less height than the gullet of the Douvres, but narrower still, and which formed the eastern entrance of the defile. It was evident that the double prolongation of the ridge of rocks continued the kind of street under the water as far as "The Man" rock, which stood like a square citadel at the extremity of the group.

At low water, indeed, which was the time at which Gilliatt was observing them, the two rows of sunken rock showed their tips, some high and dry, and all visible and preserving their parallel without interruption.

"The Man" formed the boundary, and buttressed on the eastern side the entire mass of the group, which was protected on the opposite side by the two Douvres.

The whole, from a bird's-eye view, appeared like a winding chaplet of rocks, having the Douvres at one extremity and "The Man" at the other.

The Douvres, taken together, were merely two gigantic shafts of granite protruding vertically and almost touching each other, and forming the crest of one of the mountainous ranges lying beneath the ocean. Those immense ridges are not only found rising out of the unfathomable deep. The surf and the squall had broken them up and divided them like the teeth of a saw. Only the tip of the ridge was visible; this was the group of rocks. The remainder, which the waves concealed, must have been enormous. The passage in which the storm had planted the *Durande* was the way between these two colossal shafts.

This passage, zigzag in form as the forked lightning, was of about the same width in all parts. The ocean had so fashioned it. Its eternal commotion produces sometimes those singular regularities. There is a sort of geometry in the action of the sea.

From one extremity to the other of the defile, the two parallel granite walls confronted each other at a distance which the midship frame of the *Durande* measured exactly. Between the two Douvres, the widening of the Little Douvre, curved and turned back as it was, had formed a space for the paddles. In any other part they must have been shattered to fragments.

The high double façade of rock within the passage was hideous to the sight. When, in the exploration of the desert of water which we call the ocean, we come upon the unknown world of the sea, all is uncouth and shapeless. So much as Gilliatt could see of the defile from the height of the wreck, was appalling. In the rocky gorges of the ocean we may often trace a strange permanent impersonation of shipwreck. The defile of the Douvres was one of these gorges, and its effect was exciting to the imagination. The oxydes of the rock showed on the escarpment here and there in red places, like marks of clotted blood; it resembled the splashes on the walls of an abattoir. Associations of the charnel-house haunted the place. The rough marine stones, diversely tinted—here by the decomposition of metallic amalgams mingling with the rock, there by the mould of dampness, manifested in places by purple scales, hideous green blotches, and ruddy splashes, awakened ideas of murder and extermination. It was like the unwashed walls of a chamber which had been the scene of an assassination; or it might have been imagined that men had been crushed to death there, leaving traces of their fate. The peaked rocks produced an indescribable impression of accumulated agonies. Certain spots appeared to be still dripping with the carnage; here the wall was wet, and it looked impossible to touch it without leaving the fingers bloody. The blight of massacre seemed everywhere. At the base of the double parallel escarp-



THE MONSTER.

ment, scattered along the water's edge, or just below the waves, or in the worn hollows of the rocks, were monstrous rounded masses of shingle, some scarlet, others black or purple, which bore a strange resemblance to internal organs of the body; they might have been taken for human lungs, or heart, or liver, scattered and putrifying in that dismal place. Giants might have been disembowelled there. From top to bottom of the granite ran long red lines, which might have been compared to oozings from a funeral bier.

Such aspects are frequent in sea caverns.

V.

A WORD UPON THE SECRET CO-OPERATIONS OF THE ELEMENTS.

THOSE who, by the disastrous chances of sea-voyages, happen to be condemned to a temporary habitation upon a rock in mid-ocean, find that the form of their inhospitable refuge is by no means a matter of indifference. There is the pyramidal-shaped rock, a single peak rising from the water; there is the circle-rock somewhat resembling a round of great stones; and there is the corridor-rock. The latter is the most alarming of all. It is not only the ceaseless agony of the waves between its walls, or the tumult of the imprisoned sea; there are also certain obscure meteorological characteristics, which appear to appertain to this parallelism of two marine rocks. The two straight sides seem a veritable electric battery.

The first result of the peculiar position of these corridor-rocks is an action upon the air and the water. The corridor-rock acts upon the waves and the wind mechanically by its form; galvanically, by the different magnetic action rendered possible by its vertical height, its masses in juxtaposition and contrary to each other.

This form of rock attracts to itself all the forces scattered in the winds, and exercises over the tempest a singular power of concentration.

Hence there is in the neighborhood of these breakers a certain accentuation of storms.

It must be borne in mind that the wind

is composite. The wind is believed to be simple; but it is by no means simple. Its power is not merely dynamic, it is chemical also; but this is not all, it is magnetic. Its effects are often inexplicable. The wind is as much electrical as aerial. Certain winds coincide with the *auroras boreales*. The wind blowing from the bank of the Aiguilles rolls the waves one hundred feet high; a fact observed with astonishment by Dumont-d'Urville. The corvette, he says, "knew not what to obey."

In the south seas the waters will sometimes become inflated like an outbreak of immense tumors; and at such times the ocean becomes so terrible, that the savages fly to escape the sight of it. The blasts in the north seas are different. They are mingled with sharp points of ice; and their gusts, unfit to breathe, will blow the sledges of the Esquimaux backwards on the snow. Other winds burn. The simoon of Africa is the typhoon of China and the samiel of India. Simoon, typhoon, and samiel, are believed to be the names of demons. They descend from the heights of the mountains. A storm vitrified the volcano of Toluca. This hot wind, a whirlwind of inky color, rushing upon red clouds, is alluded to in the Vedas: "Behold the black god, who comes to steal the red cows." In all these facts we trace the presence of the electric mystery.

The wind indeed is full of it; so is the waves. The sea, too, is composite in its nature. Under its waves of water which we see, it has its waves of force which are invisible. Its constituents are innumerable. Of all the elements the ocean is the most indivisible and the most profound.

Endeavor to conceive this chaos so enormous that it dwarfs all other things to one level. It is the universal recipient, reservoir of germs of life, and mold of transformations. It amasses and then disperses, it accumulates and then sows, it devours and then creates. It receives all the waste and refuse waters of the earth, and converts them into treasure. It is solid in the iceberg, liquid in the wave, fluid in the estuary. Regarded as matter, it is a mass; regarded as a force, it is an abstraction. It equalizes and unites all

phenomena. It may be called the infinite in combination. By force and disturbance, it arrives at transparency. It dissolves all differences, and absorbs them into its own unity. Its elements are so numerous that it becomes identity. One of its drops is complete, and represents the whole. From the abundance of its tempests, it attains equilibrium. Plato beheld the mazy dances of the spheres. Strange fact, though not the less real, the ocean, in the vast terrestrial journey round the sun, becomes, with its flux and reflux, the balance of the globe.

In a phenomenon of the sea, all other phenomena are resumed. The sea is blown out of a water-spout as from a syphon; the storm observes the principle of the pump; the lightning issues from the sea as from the air. Aboard ships dull shocks are sometimes felt, and an odor of sulphur issues from the receptacles of chain cables. The ocean boils. "The devil has put the sea in his caldron," said De Ruyter. In certain tempests which characterize the equinoxes and the return to equilibrium of the prolific power of nature, vessels breasting the foam seem to give out a kind of fire, phosphoric lights chase each other along the rigging, so close sometimes to the sailors at their work that the latter stretch forth their hands and try to catch, as they fly, these birds of flame. After the great earthquake of Lisbon, a blast of hot air, as from a furnace, drove before it towards the city a wave sixty feet high. The oscillation of the ocean is closely related to the convulsions of the earth.

These immeasurable forces produce sometimes extraordinary inundations. At the end of the year 1864 one of the Maldivé Islands, at a hundred leagues from the Malabar coast, actually foundered in the sea. It sunk to the bottom like a shipwrecked vessel. The fishermen who sailed from it in the morning, found nothing when they returned at night; scarcely could they distinguish their villages under the sea. On this occasion boats were the spectators of the wrecks of houses.

In Europe, where nature seems restrained by the presence of civilization,

such events are rare and are thought impossible. Nevertheless, Jersey and Guernsey originally formed part of Gaul, and at the moment while we are writing these lines, an equinoctial gale has demolished a great portion of the cliff of the Firth of Forth in Scotland.

Nowhere do these terrific forces appear more formidably conjoined than in the surprising strait known as the Lyse-Fiord. The Lyse-Fiord is the most terrible of all the Gut Rocks of the ocean. Their terrors are there complete. It is in the northern sea, near the inhospitable Gulf of Stavanger, and in the 59th degree of latitude. The water is black and heavy, and subject to intermitting storms. In this sea, and in the midst of this solitude, rises a great sombre street—a street for no human footsteps. None ever pass through there; no ship ever ventures in. It is a corridor ten leagues in length, between two rocky walls of three thousand feet in height. Such is the passage which presents an entrance to the sea. The defile has its elbows and angles like all these streets of the sea—never straight, having been formed by the irregular action of the water. In the Lyse-Fiord, the sea is almost always tranquil; the sky above is serene; the place terrible. Where is the wind? Not on high. Where is the thunder? Not in the heavens. The wind is under the sea; the lightnings within the rock. Now and then there is a convulsion of the water. At certain moments, when there is perhaps not a cloud in the sky, nearly half way up the perpendicular rock, at a thousand or fifteen hundred feet above the water, and rather on the southern than on the northern side, the rock suddenly thunders, lightnings dart forth, and then retire like those toys which lengthen out and spring back again in the hands of children. They contract and enlarge; strike the opposite cliff, re-enter the rock, issue forth again, recommence their play, multiply their heads and tips of flame, grow bristling with points, strike wherever they can, recommence again, and then are extinguished with a sinister abruptness. Flocks of birds fly wide in terror. Nothing is

more mysterious than that artillery issuing out of the invisible. One cliff attacks the other, raining lightning blows from side to side. Their war concerns not man. It signals the ancient enmity of two rocks in the impassable gulf.

In the Lyse-Fiord, the wind whirls like the water in an estuary; the rock performs the function of the clouds; and the thunder breaks forth like volcanic fire. This strange defile is a voltaic pile; the plates of which are the double line of cliffs.

VI.

A STABLE FOR THE HORSE.

GILLIATT was sufficiently familiar with marine rocks to grapple in earnest with the Douvres. Before all, as we have just said, it was necessary to find a safe shelter for the barge.

The double row of reefs, which stretched in a sinuous form behind the Douvres, connected itself here and there with other rocks, and suggested the existence of blind passages and hollows opening out into the straggling way, and joining again to the principal defile like branches to a trunk.

The lower part of these rocks was covered with kelp, the upper part with lichens. The uniform level of the seaweed marked the line of the water at the height of the tide, and the limit of the sea in calm weather. The points which the water had not touched presented those silver and golden hues communicated to marine granite by the white and yellow lichen.

A crust of conoidical shells covered the rock at certain points, the dry rot of the granite.

At other points in the retreating angles, where fine sand had accumulated, ribbed on its surface rather by the wind than by the waves, appeared tufts of blue thistles.

In the indentations, sheltered from the winds, could be traced the little perforations made by the sea-urchin. This shelly mass of prickles, which moves about a living ball, by rolling on its spines, and the armor of which is composed of ten thousand pieces, artistically adjusted and

welded together—the sea-urchin, which is popularly called, for some unknown reason, “Aristotle’s lantern,” wears away the granite with his five teeth, and lodges himself in the hole. It is in such holes that the samphire gatherers find them. They cut them in halves and eat them raw, like an oyster. Some steep their bread in the soft flesh. Hence its other name, “Sea-egg.”

The tips of the further reefs, left out of the water by the receding tide, extended close under the escarpment of “The Man” to a sort of creek, enclosed nearly on all sides by rocky walls. Here was evidently a possible harborage. It had the form of a horseshoe, and opened only on one side to the east wind, which is the least violent of all winds in that sea labyrinth. The water was shut in there, and almost motionless. The shelter seemed comparatively safe. Gilliatt, moreover, had not much choice.

If he wished to take advantage of the low water, it was important to make haste.

The weather continued to be fine and calm. The insolent sea was for a while in a gentle mood.

Gilliatt descended, put on his shoes again, unmoored the cable, re-embarked, and pushed out into the water. He used the oars, coasting the side of the rock.

Having reached “The Man” rock, he examined the entrance to the little creek.

A fixed, wavy line in the motionless sea, a sort of wrinkle, imperceptible to any eye but that of a sailor, marked the channel.

Gilliatt studied for a moment its lineament, almost indistinct under the water; then he held off a little in order to veer at ease, and steer well into channel; and suddenly with a stroke of the oars he entered the little bay.

He sounded.

The anchorage appeared to be excellent.

The sloop would be protected there against almost any of the contingencies of the season.

The most formidable reefs have quiet nooks of this sort. The ports which are thus found among the breakers are like the hospitality of the fierce Bedouin—friendly and sure.

Gilliatt placed the sloop as near as he

could to "The Man," but still far enough to escape grazing the rock; and he cast his two anchors.

That done, he crossed his arms, and reflected on his position.

The sloop was sheltered. Here was one problem solved. But another remained. Where could he now shelter himself?

He had the choice of two places: the sloop itself, with its corner of cabin, which was scarcely habitable, and the summit of "The Man" rock, which was not difficult to scale.

From one or other of these refuges it was possible at low water, by jumping from rock to rock, to gain the passage between the Douvres where the *Durande* was fixed, almost without wetting the feet.

But low water lasts but a short while, and all the rest of the time he would be cut off either from his shelter or from the wreck by more than two hundred fathoms. Swimming among breakers is difficult at all times; if there is the least commotion in the sea it is impossible.

He was driven to give up the idea of shelter in the sloop or on "The Man."

No resting-place was possible among the neighboring rocks.

The summits of the lower ones disappeared twice a day beneath the rising tide.

The summits of the higher ones were constantly swept by the flakes of foam, and promised nothing but an inhospitable drenching.

No choice remained but the wreck itself.

Was it possible to seek refuge there?

Gilliatt hoped it might be.

VII.

A CHAMBER FOR THE VOYAGER.

HALF-AN-HOUR afterwards, Gilliatt having returned to the wreck, climbed to the deck, went below, and descended into the hold, completing the summary survey of his first visit.

By the help of the capstan he had raised to the deck of the *Durande* the package which he had made of the lading of the sloop. The capstan had worked

well. Bars for turning it were not wanting. Gilliatt had only to take his choice among the heap of wreck.

He found among the fragments a chisel, dropped, no doubt, from the carpenter's box, and which he added to his little stock of tools.

Besides this—for in poverty of appliances so complete everything counts for a little—he had his jack-knife in his pocket.

Gilliatt worked the whole day long on the wreck, clearing away, propping, arranging.

At nightfall he observed the following facts:

The entire wreck shook in the wind. The carcass trembled at every step he took. There was nothing stable or strong except the portion of the hull jammed between the rocks which contained the engine. There the beams were powerfully supported by the granite walls.

Fixing his home in the *Durande* would be imprudent. It would increase the weight; but far from adding to her burden, it was important to lighten it. To burden the wreck in any way was indeed the very contrary of what he wanted.

The mass of ruin required, in fact, the most careful management. It was like a sick man at the approach of dissolution. The wind would do sufficient to help it to its end.

It was, moreover, unfortunate enough to be compelled to work there. The amount of disturbance which the wreck would have to withstand would necessarily distress it, perhaps beyond its strength.

Besides, if any accident should happen in the night while Gilliatt was sleeping, he must necessarily perish with the vessel. No assistance was possible; all would be over. In order to help the shattered vessel, it was absolutely necessary to remain outside it.

How to be outside and yet near it, this was the problem.

The difficulty became more complicated as he considered it.

Where could he find a shelter under such conditions?

Gilliatt reflected.

There remained nothing but the two Douvres. They seemed hopeless enough.

From below, it was possible to distinguish upon the upper plateau of the Great Douvre a sort of protuberance.

High rocks with flattened summits, like the Great Douvre and "The Man," are a sort of decapitated peaks. They abound among the mountains and in the ocean. Certain rocks, particularly those which are met with in the open sea, bear marks like half-felled trees. They have the appearance of having received blows from a hatchet. They have been subjected, in fact, to the blows of the gale, that indefatigable pioneer of the sea.

There are other still more profound causes of marine convulsions. Hence the innumerable bruises upon these primeval masses of granite. Some of these sea giants have their heads struck off.

Sometimes these heads, from some inexplicable cause, do not fall, but remain shattered on the summit of the mutilated trunk. This singularity is by no means rare. The Devil's Rock, at Guernsey, and the Table, in the Valley of Anweiler, illustrate some of the most surprising features of this strange geological enigma.

Some such phenomena had probably fashioned the summit of the Great Douvre.

If the protuberance which could be observed on the plateau were not a natural irregularity in the stone, it must necessarily be some remaining fragment of the shattered summit.

Perhaps the fragment might contain some excavation—some hole into which a man could creep for cover. Gilliatt asked for no more.

But how could he reach the plateau? How could he scale that perpendicular wall, hard and polished as a pebble, half covered with the growth of glutinous confervæ, and having the slippery look of a soapy surface?

The ridge of the plateau was at least thirty feet above the deck of the *Durande*.

Gilliatt took out of his box of tools the knotted cord, hooked it to his belt by the grapnel, and set to work to scale the Little Douvre. The ascent became more diffi-

cult as he climbed. He had forgotten to take off his shoes, a fact which increased the difficulty. With great labor and straining, however, he reached the point. Safely arrived there, he raised himself and stood erect. There was scarcely room for his two feet. To make it his lodging would be difficult. A Stylite might have contented himself there; Gilliatt, more luxurious in his requirements, wanted something more commodious.

The Little Douvre, leaning towards the great one, looked from a distance as if it was saluting it, and the space between the Douvres, which was some score of feet below, was only eight or ten at the highest points.

From the spot to which he had climbed, Gilliatt saw more distinctly the rocky ex-crescence which partly covered the plateau of the Great Douvre.

This plateau rose three fathoms at least above his head.

A precipice separated him from it. The curved escarpment of the Little Douvre sloped away out of sight beneath him.

He detached the knotted rope from his belt, took a rapid glance at the dimensions of the rock, and slung the grapnel up to the plateau.

The grapnel scratched the rock, and slipped. The knotted rope with the hooks at its end fell down beneath his feet, swinging against the side of the Little Douvre.

He renewed the attempt; slung the rope further, aiming at the granite protuberance, in which he could perceive crevices and scratches.

The cast was, this time, so neat and skillful, that the hooks caught.

He pulled from below. A portion of the rock broke away and the knotted rope with its heavy iron came down once more, striking the escarpment beneath his feet.

He slung the grapnel a third time.

It did not fall.

He put a strain upon the rope; it resisted. The grapnel was firmly anchored.

The hooks had caught in some fracture of the plateau which he could not see.

It was necessary to trust his life to that unknown support.

He did not hesitate.

The matter was urgent. He was compelled to take the shortest route.

Moreover, to descend again to the deck of the *Durande*, in order to devise some other step, was impossible. A slip was probable, and a fall almost certain. It was easier to climb than to descend.

Gilliatt's movements were decisive, as are those of all good sailors. He never wasted force. He always proportioned his efforts to the work in hand. Hence the prodigies of strength which he executed with ordinary muscles. His biceps were no more powerful than that of ordinary men; but his heart was firmer. He added, in fact, to strength which is physical, energy which belongs to the moral faculties.

The feat to be accomplished was appalling. It was to cross the space between the two *Douvres*, hanging only by this slender line.

Oftentimes in the path of duty and devotedness, the figure of death rises before men to present these terrible questions:

Wilt thou do this? asks the shadow.

Gilliatt tested the cord again; the grappling-iron held firm.

Wrapping his left hand in his handkerchief, he grasped the knotted cord with his right hand, which he covered with his left; then stretching out one foot, and striking out sharply with the other against the rock, in order that the impetus might prevent the rope twisting, he precipitated himself from the height of the Little *Douvre* on to the escarpment of the great one.

The shock was severe.

There was a rebound.

His clenched fists struck the rocks in their turn; the handkerchief had loosened, and they were scratched; they had indeed narrowly escaped being crushed.

Gilliatt remained hanging there a moment dizzy.

He was sufficiently master of himself not to let go his hold of the cord.

A few moments passed in jerks and oscillations before he could catch the cord with his feet; but he succeeded at last.

Recovering himself, and holding the cord at last between his naked feet as with two hands, he gazed into the depth below.

He had no anxiety about the length of

the cord, which had many a time served him for great heights. The cord, in fact, trailed upon the deck of the *Durande*.

Assured of being able to descend again, he began to climb hand over hand, and still clinging with his feet.

In a few moments he had gained the summit.

Never before had any creature without wings found a footing there. The plateau was covered in parts with the dung of birds. It was an irregular trapezium, a mass struck off from the colossal granitic prism of the Great *Douvre*. This block was hollowed in the centre like a basin—a work of the rain.

Gilliatt, in fact, had guessed correctly.

At the southern angle of the block, he found a mass of superimposed rocks, probably fragments of the fallen summit. These rocks, looking like a heap of giant paving-stones, would have left room for a wild beast, if one could have found its way there, to secrete himself between them. They supported themselves confusedly one against the other, leaving interstices like a heap of ruins. They formed neither grottoes nor caves, but the pile was full of holes like a sponge. One of these holes was large enough to admit a man.

This recess had a flooring of moss and a few tufts of grass. Gilliatt could fit himself in it as in a kind of sheath. The recess at its entrance was about two feet high. It contracted towards the bottom. Stone coffins sometimes have this form. The mass of rocks behind lying towards the south-west, the recess was sheltered from the showers, but was open to the cold north wind.

Gilliatt was satisfied with the place.

The two chief problems were solved; the sloop had a harbor, and he had found a shelter.

The chief merit of his cave was its accessibility from the wreck.

The grappling-iron of the knotted cord, having fallen between two blocks, had become firmly hooked, but Gilliatt rendered it more difficult to give way by rolling a huge stone upon it.

He was now free to operate at leisure upon the *Durande*.

Henceforth he was at home.

The Great Douvre was his dwelling; the Durande was his workshop.

Nothing was more simple for him than going to and fro, ascending and descending.

He dropped down easily by the knotted cord on to the deck.

The day's work was a good one, the enterprise had begun well; he was satisfied, and began to feel hungry.

He untied his basket of provisions, opened his knife, cut a slice of smoked beef, took a bite out of his brown loaf, drank a draught from his can of fresh water, and supped admirably.

To do well and eat well are two satisfactions. A full stomach resembles an easy conscience.

This supper was ended, and there was still before him a little more daylight. He took advantage of it to begin the lightening of the wreck—an urgent necessity.

He had passed part of the day in gathering up the fragments. He put on one side, in the strong compartment which contained the machine, all that might become of use to him, such as wood, iron, cordage, and canvas. What was useless he cast into the sea.

The cargo of the sloop hoisted on to the deck by the capstan, compact as he had made it, was an encumbrance. Gilliatt surveyed the species of niche, at a height within his reach, in the side of the Little Douvre. These natural closets, not shut in, it is true, are often seen in the rocks. It struck him that it was possible to trust some stores to this dépôt, and he accordingly placed in the back of the recess his two boxes containing his tools and his clothing, and his two bags holding the rye-meal and the biscuit. In the front—a little too near the edge perhaps, but he had no other place—he rested his basket of provisions.

He had taken care to remove from the box of clothing his sheepskin, his loose coat with a hood, and his waterproof overalls.

To lessen the hold of the wind upon the knotted cord, he made the lower extremity fast to one of the riders of the Durande.

The Durande being much driven in, this rider was bent a good deal, and it held the end of the cord as firmly as a tight hand.

There was still the difficulty of the upper end of the cord. To control the lower part was well, but at the summit of the escarpment, at the spot where the knotted cord met the ridge of the plateau, there was reason to fear that it would be fretted and worn away by the sharp angle of the rock.

Gilliatt searched in the heap of rubbish in reserve, and took from it some rags of sail-cloth, and from a bunch of old cables he pulled out some strands of rope-yarn with which he filled his pockets.

A sailor would have guessed that he intended to bind with these pieces of sail-cloth and ends of yarn, the part of the knotted rope upon the edge of the rock, so as to preserve it from all friction—an operation which is called “keckling.”

Having provided himself with these things, he drew on his overalls over his legs, put on his waterproof coat over his jacket, drew its hood over his red cap, hung the sheepskin round his neck by the two legs, and clothed in this complete panoply, he grasped the cord, now firmly fixed to the side of the Great Douvre, and mounted to the assault of that sombre citadel in the sea.

In spite of his scratched hands, Gilliatt easily regained the summit.

The last pale tints of sunset were fading in the sky. It was night upon the sea below. A little light still lingered upon the height of the Douvre.

Gilliatt took advantage of this remains of daylight to bind the knotted rope. He wound it round again and again at the part which passed over the edge of the rock, with a bandage of several thicknesses of canvas strongly tied at every turn. The whole resembled in some degree the padding which actresses place upon their knees, to prepare them for the agonies and supplications of the fifth act.

This binding completely accomplished, Gilliatt rose from his stooping position.

For some moments, while he had been busied in his task, he had had a confused

sense of a singular fluttering in the air. It resembled, in the silence of the evening, the noise which an immense bat might make with the beating of its wings.

Gilliatt raised his eyes.

A great black circle was revolving over his head in the pale twilight sky.

Such circles are seen in pictures round the heads of saints. These, however, are golden on a dark ground, while the circle around Gilliatt was dark upon a pale ground. The effect was strange. It spread round the Great Douvre like the aureole of night.

The circle drew nearer, then retired; grew narrower, and then spread wide again.

It was an immense flight of gulls, sea-mews, and cormorants; a vast multitude of affrighted sea birds.

The Great Douvre was probably their lodging, and they were coming to rest for the night. Gilliatt had taken a chamber in their home. It was evident that their unexpected fellow-lodger disturbed them.

A man there was an object they had never beheld before.

Their wild flutter continued for some time. They seemed to be waiting for the stranger to leave the place.

Gilliatt followed them dreamily with his eyes.

The flying multitude seemed at last to give up their design. The circle suddenly took a spiral form, and the cloud of sea birds came down upon "The Man" rock at the extremity of the group, where they seemed to be conferring and deliberating.

Gilliatt, after settling down in his alcove of granite, and covering a stone for a pillow for his head, could hear the birds for a long time chattering one after the other, or croaking, as if in turns.

Then they were silent, and all were sleeping—the birds upon their rock, Gilliatt upon his.

VIII.

IMPORTUNÆQUE VOLUCRES.

GILLIATT slept well; but he was cold, and this awoke him from time to time.

He had naturally placed his feet at the bottom, and his head at the entrance to his cave. He had not taken the precaution to remove from his couch a number of angular stones, which did not by any means conduce to sleep.

Now and then he half opened his eyes.

At intervals he heard loud noises. It was the rising tide entering the caverns of the rocks with a sound like the report of a cannon.

All the circumstances of his position conspired to produce the effect of a vision. Hallucinations seemed to surround him. The vagueness of night increased this effect; and Gilliatt felt himself plunged into some region of unrealities. He asked himself if all were not a dream?

Then he dropped to sleep again; and this time, in a veritable dream, found himself at the Bû de la Rue, at the Bravées, at St. Sampson. He heard Déruchette singing; he was among realities. While he slept he seemed to wake and live; when he awoke again he appeared to be sleeping.

In truth, from this time forward he lived in a dream.

Towards the middle of the night a confused murmur filled the air. Gilliatt had a vague consciousness of it even in his sleep. It was perhaps a breeze arising.

Once, when awakened by a cold shiver, he opened his eyes a little wider than before. Clouds were moving in the zenith; the moon was flying through the sky, with one large star following closely in her footsteps.

Gilliatt's mind was full of the incidents of his dreams. The wild outlines of things in the darkness were exaggerated by this confusion with the impressions of his sleeping hours.

At daybreak he was half frozen; but he slept soundly.

The sudden daylight aroused him from a slumber which might have been dangerous. The alcove faced the rising sun.

Gilliatt yawned, stretched himself, and sprang out of his sleeping place.

His sleep had been so deep, that he could not at first recall the circumstances of the night before.

By degrees the feeling of reality returned, and he began to think of breakfast.

The weather was calm; the sky cool and serene. The clouds were gone; the night wind had cleared the horizon, and the sun rose brightly. Another fine day was commencing. Gilliatt felt joyful.

He threw off his overcoat and his leggings; rolled them up in the sheepskin with the wool inside, fastened the roll with a length of rope-yarn, and pushed it into the cavern for a shelter in case of rain.

This done, he made his bed—an operation which consisted in removing the stones which had annoyed him in the night.

His bed made, he slid down the cord on to the deck of the *Durande* and approached the niche where he had placed his basket of provisions. As it was very near the edge, the wind in the night had swept it down, and rolled it into the sea.

It was evident that it would not be easy to recover it. There was a spirit of mischief and malice in a wind which had sought out his basket in that position.

It was the commencement of hostilities. Gilliatt understood the token.

To those who live in a state of rude familiarity with the sea, it becomes natural to regard the wind as an individuality, and the rocks as sentient beings.

Nothing remained but the biscuit and the rye-meal, except the shell-fish, on which the shipwrecked sailor had supported a lingering existence upon "The Man" rock.

It was useless to think of subsisting by net or line fishing. Fish are naturally averse to the neighborhood of rocks. The drag and bow net fishers would waste their labor among the breakers, the points of which would be destructive only to their nets.

Gilliatt breakfasted on a few limpets which he plucked with difficulty from the rocks. He narrowly escaped breaking his knife in the attempt.

While he was making his spare meal, he was sensible of a strange disturbance on the sea. He looked around.

It was a swarm of gulls and seamews which had just alighted upon some low rocks, and were beating their wings, tumbling over each other, screaming, and shrieking. All were swarming noisily upon the same point. This horde with beaks and talons were evidently pillaging something.

It was Gilliatt's basket.

Rolled down upon a sharp point by the wind, the basket had burst open. The birds had gathered round immediately. They were carrying off in their beaks all sorts of fragments of provisions. Gilliatt recognized from the distance his smoked beef and his salted fish.

It was their turn now to be aggressive. The birds had taken to reprisals. Gilliatt had robbed them of their lodging, they deprived him of his supper.

IX.

THE ROCK, AND HOW GILLIATT USED IT.

A WEEK passed.

Although it was in the rainy season no rain fell, a fact for which Gilliatt felt thankful. But the work he had entered upon surpassed, in appearance at least, the power of human hand or skill. Success appeared so improbable that the attempt seemed like madness.

It is not until a task is fairly grappled with that its difficulties and perils become fully manifest. There is nothing like making a commencement for making evident how difficult it will be to come to the end. Every beginning is a struggle against resistance. The first step is an exorable undeceiver. A difficulty which we come to touch pricks like a thorn.

Gilliatt found himself immediately in the presence of obstacles.

In order to raise the engine of the *Durande* from the wreck in which it was three-fourths buried, with any chance of success—in order to accomplish a salvage in such a place and in such a season, it seemed almost necessary to be a legion of men. Gilliatt was alone. A complete apparatus of carpenters' and engineers' tools and implements were wanted. Gilliatt

had a saw, a hatchet, a chisel, and a hammer. He wanted both a good workshop and a good shed; Gilliatt had not a roof to cover him. Provisions, too, were necessary, but he had not even bread.

Any one who could have seen Gilliatt working on the rock during all that first week might have been puzzled to determine the nature of his operations. He seemed to be no longer thinking either of the *Durande* or the two *Douvres*. He was busy only among the breakers: he seemed absorbed in saving the smaller parts of the shipwreck. He took advantage of every high tide to strip the reefs of everything which the shipwreck had distributed among them. He went from rock to rock, picking up whatever the sea had scattered—tatters of sail-cloth, pieces of iron, splinters of panels, shattered planking, broken yards—here a beam, there a chain, there a pulley.

At the same time he carefully surveyed all the recesses of the rocks. To his great disappointment none were habitable. He had suffered from the cold in the night, where he lodged between the stones on the summit of the rock, and he would gladly have found some better refuge.

Two of those recesses were somewhat extensive. Although the natural pavement of rock was almost everywhere oblique and uneven it was possible to stand upright, and even to walk within them. The wind and the rain wandered there at will, but the highest tides did not reach them. They were near the Little *Douvre*, and were approachable at any time. Gilliatt decided that one should serve him as a store-house, the other as a forge.

With all the sail, rope-bands, and all the reef-earrings he could collect, he made packages of the fragments of wreck, tying up the wood and iron in bundles, and the canvas in parcels. He lashed all these together carefully. As the rising tide approached these packages, he began to drag them across the reefs to his store-house. In a hollow of the rocks he had found a top rope, by means of which he had been able to haul even the large pieces of timber. In the same manner he dragged from the sea the numerous portions of

chains which he found scattered among the breakers.

Gilliatt worked at these tasks with astonishing activity and tenacity. He accomplished whatever he attempted—nothing could withstand his ant-like perseverance.

At the end of the week he had gathered into this granite warehouse of marine stores, and ranged into order, all this miscellaneous and shapeless mass of salvage. There was a corner for the tacks of sails and a corner for sheets. Bow-lines were not mixed with halliards; parrels were arranged according to their number of holes. The coverings of rope-yarn, unwound from the broken anchorings, were tied in bunches; the dead-eyes without pulleys were separated from the tackle-blocks. Belaying-pins, bullseyes, preventer-shrouds, down-hauls, snatch-blocks, pendants, kevels, trusses, stoppers, sailbooms, if they were not completely damaged by the storm, occupied different compartments. All the cross-beams, timber-work, uprights, stanchions, mast-heads, binding-strakes, portlids, and clamps, were heaped up apart. Wherever it was possible he had fixed the fragments of planks, from the vessel's bottom, one in the other. There was no confusion between reef-points and nippers of the cable, nor of crow's-feet with towlines; nor of pulleys of the small with pulleys of the large ropes; nor of fragments from the waist with fragments from the stern. A place had been reserved for a portion of the cat-harpings of the *Durande*, which had supported the shrouds of the top-mast and the futtock-shrouds. Every portion had its place. The entire wreck was there classed and ticketed. It was a sort of chaos in a store-house.

A stay-sail, fixed by huge stones, served, though torn and damaged, to protect what the rain might have injured.

Shattered as were the bows of the wreck, he had succeeded in saving the two cat-heads with their three pulley-blocks.

He had found the bowsprit too, and had had much trouble in unrolling its gammoning; it was very hard and tight, having been, according to custom, made by the help of the windlass, and in dry weather. Gilliatt, however, persevered

until he had detached it, this thick rope promising to be very useful to him.

He had been equally successful in discovering the little anchor which had become fast in the hollow of a reef, where the receding tide had left it uncovered.

In what had been Tangrouille's cabin he had found a piece of chalk, which he preserved carefully. He reflected that he might have some marks to make.

A fire-bucket and several pails in pretty good condition completed this stock of working materials.

All that remained of the store of coal of the *Durande* he carried into the warehouse.

In a week this salvage of débris was finished; the rock was swept clean, and the *Durande* was lightened. Nothing remained now to burden the hull except the machinery.

The portion of the fore-side bulwarks which hung to it did not distress the hull. The mass hung without dragging, being partly sustained by a ledge of rock. It was, however, large and broad, and heavy to drag, and would have encumbered his warehouse too much. This bulwarking looked something like a boat-builder's stocks. Gilliatt left it where it was.

He had been profoundly thoughtful during all this labor. He had sought in vain for the figurehead—the “doll,” as the Guernsey folks called it, of the *Durande*. It was one of the things which the waves had carried away forever. Gilliatt would have given his hands to find it—if he had not had such peculiar need of them at that time.

At the entrance to the storehouse and outside were two heaps of refuse—a heap of iron good for forging, and a heap of wood good for burning.

Gilliatt was always at work at early dawn. Except his time of sleep, he did not take a moment of repose.

The wild sea birds, flying hither and thither, watched him at his work.

X.

THE FORGE.

The warehouse completed, Gilliatt constructed his forge.

The other recess which he had chosen had within it a species of passage like a gallery in a mine of pretty good depth. He had had at first an idea of making this his lodging, but the draught was so continuous and so persevering in this passage, that he had been compelled to give it up. This current of air, incessantly renewed, first gave him the notion of the forge. Since it could not be his chamber, he was determined that this cabin should be his smithy. To bend obstacles to our purposes is a great step towards triumph. The wind was Gilliatt's enemy. He had set about making it his servant.

The proverb applied to certain kinds of men—“fit for everything, good for nothing”—may also be applied to the hollows of rocks. They give no advantages gratuitously. On one side we find a hollow fashioned conveniently in the shape of a bath; but it allows the water to run away through a fissure. Here is a rocky chamber, but without a roof; here a bed of moss, but oozy with wet; here an arm-chair, but one of hard stone.

The forge which Gilliatt intended was roughly sketched out by nature; but nothing could be more troublesome than to reduce this rough sketch to manageable shape, to transform this cavern into a laboratory and smith's shop. With three or four large rocks, shaped like a funnel, and ending in a narrow fissure, chance had constructed there a species of vast ill-shapen blower, of very different power to those huge old forge bellows of fourteen feet long, which poured out at every breath ninety-eight thousand inches of air. This was quite a different sort of construction. The proportions of the hurricane cannot be definitely measured.

This excess of force was an embarrassment. The incessant draught was difficult to regulate.

The cavern had two inconveniences; the wind traversed it from end to end; so did the water.

This was not the water of the sea, but a continual little trickling stream, more like a spring than a torrent.

The foam, cast incessantly by the surf upon the rocks and sometimes more than

a hundred feet in the air, had filled with sea water a natural cave situated among the high rocks overlooking the excavation. The overflowings of this reservoir caused, a little behind the escarpment, a fall of water of about an inch in breadth, and descending four or five fathoms. An occasional contribution from the rains also helped to fill the reservoir. From time to time a passing cloud dropped a shower into the rocky basin, always overflowing. The water was brackish, and unfit to drink, but clear. This rill of water fell in graceful drops from the extremities of the long marine grasses, as from the ends of a length of hair.

He was struck with the idea of making this water serve to regulate the draught in the cave. By the means of a funnel made of planks roughly and hastily put together to form two or three pipes, one of which was fitted with a valve, and of a large tub arranged as a lower reservoir, without checks or counterweight, and completed solely by air-tight stuffing above and air-holes below, Gilliatt, who, as we have already said, was handy at the forge and at the mechanic's bench, succeeded in constructing, instead of the forge-bellows, which he did not possess, an apparatus less perfect than what is known nowadays by the name of a "cagniardelle," but less rude than what the people of the Pyrenees anciently called a "trompe."

He had some rye-meal, and he manufactured with it some paste. He had also some white rope, which picked out into tow. With this paste and tow, and some bits of wood, he stopped all the crevices of the rock, leaving only a little air-passage, made of a powder-flask which he had found aboard the *Durande*, and which had served for loading the signal gun. This powder-flask was directed horizontally to a large stone, which Gilliatt made the hearth of the forge. A stopper made of a piece of tow served to close it in case of need.

After this, he heaped up the wood and coal upon the hearth, struck his steel against the bare rock, caught a spark upon a handful of loose tow, and having ignited it, soon lighted his forge fire.

He tried the blower: it worked well.

Gilliatt felt the pride of a Cyclops: he was the master of air, water, and fire. Master of the air; for he had given a kind of lungs to the wind, and changed the rude draught into a useful blower. Master of water, for he had converted the little cascade into a "trompe." Master of fire, for out of this moist rock he had struck a flame.

The cave being almost everywhere open to the sky, the smoke issued freely, blackening the curved escarpment. The rocks which seemed destined forever to receive only the white foam, became now familiar with the blackening smoke.

Gilliatt selected for an anvil a large smooth round stone, of about the required shape and dimensions. It formed a base for the blows of his hammer; but one that might fly and was very dangerous. One of the extremities of this block, rounded and ending in a point, might, for want of anything better, serve instead of a conoid bicorn; but the other kind of bicorn of the pyramidal form was wanting. It was the ancient stone anvil of the Troglodytes. The surface, polished by the waves, had almost the firmness of steel.

He regretted not having brought his anvil. As he did not know that the *Durande* had been broken in two by the tempest, he had hoped to find the carpenter's chest and all his tools generally kept in the fore hold. But it was precisely the fore part of the vessel which had been carried away.

These two excavations which he had found in the rock were contiguous. The warehouse and the forge communicated with each other.

Every evening, when his work was ended, he supped on a little biscuit, moistened in water, a sea-urchin or a crab, or a few *châtaignes de mer*, the only food to be found among those rocks; and shivering like his knotted cord, mounted again to sleep in his cell upon the Great Douvre.

The very materialism of his daily occupation increased the kind of abstraction in which he lived. To be steeped too

deeply in realities, is, in itself, a cause of visionary moods. His bodily labor, with its infinite variety of details, detracted nothing from the sensation of stupor which arose from the strangeness of his position and his work. Ordinary bodily fatigue is a thread which binds man to the earth; but the very peculiarity of the enterprise he was engaged in kept him in a sort of ideal twilight region. There were times when he seemed to be striking blows with his hammer in the clouds. At other moments his tools appeared to him like arms. He had a singular feeling, as if he was repressing or providing against some latent danger of attack. Untwisting ropes, unravelling threads of yarn in a sail, or propping up a couple of beams, appeared to him at such times like fashioning engines of war. The thousand minute pains which he took about his salvage operations produced at last in his mind the effect of precautions against aggressions little concealed, and easy to anticipate. He did not know the words which express the ideas, but he perceived them. His instincts became less and less those of the worker; his habits more and more those of the savage man.

His business there was to subdue and direct the powers of nature. He had an indistinct perception of it. A strange enlargement of his ideas!

Around him, far as eye could reach, was the vast prospect of endless labor wasted and lost. Nothing is more disturbing to the mind than the contemplation of the diffusion of forces at work in the unfathomable and illimitable space of the ocean. The mind tends naturally to seek the object of these forces. The unceasing movement in space, the unwearying sea, the clouds that seem ever hurrying somewhere, the vast mysterious prodigality of effort, all this is a problem. Whither does this perpetual movement tend? What do these winds construct? What do these giant blows build up? These howlings, shocks, and sobbings of the storm, what do they end in? and what is the business of this tumult? The ebb and flow of these questionings is eternal, as the flux and reflux of the sea itself. Gilliatt

could answer for himself; his work he knew, but the agitation which surrounded him far and wide at all times perplexed him confusedly with its eternal questionings. Unknown to himself, mechanically, by the mere pressure of external things, and without any other effect than a strange, unconscious bewilderment, Gilliatt, in this dreamy mood, blended his own toil somehow with the prodigious wasted labor of the sea-waves. How, indeed, in that position, could he escape the influence of that mystery of the dread, laborious ocean? how do other than meditate, so far as meditation was possible, upon the vacillation of the waves, the perseverance of the foam, the imperceptible wearing down of rocks, the furious beatings of the four winds? How terrible that perpetual recommencement, that ocean bed, those Danaïdes-like clouds, all that travail and weariness for no end!

For no end? Not so! But for what? O Thou Infinite Unknown, Thou only knowest!

XI.

DISCOVERY.

A ROCK near the coast is sometimes visited by men; a rock in mid-ocean never. What object could any one have there? No supplies can be drawn thence; no fruit-trees are there, no pasturage, no beasts, no springs of water fitted for man's use. It stands aloft, a rock with its steep sides and summits above water, and its sharp points below. Nothing is to be found there but inevitable shipwreck.

This kind of rocks, which in the old sea dialect were called *Isolés*, are, as we have said, strange places. The sea is alone there; she works her own will. No token of terrestrial life disturbs her. Man is a terror to the sea; she is shy of his approach, and hides from him her deeds. But she is bolder among the lone sea rocks. The everlasting soliloquy of the waves is not troubled there. She labors at the rocks, repairs its damage, sharpens its peaks, makes them rugged or renews them. She pierces the granite, wears down the soft stone, and denudes

the hard; she rummages, dismembers, bores, perforates, and grooves; she fills the rock with cells, and makes it sponge-like, hollows out the inside, or sculpts it without. In that secret mountain which is hers, she makes to herself caves, sanctuaries, palaces. She has her splendid and monstrous vegetation, composed of floating plants which bite, and of monsters which take root; and she hides away all this terrible magnificence in the twilight of her deeps. Among the isolated rocks no eye watches over her; no spy embarrasses her movements. It is there that she develops at liberty her mysterious side, which is inaccessible to man. Here she keeps all strange secretions of life. Here that the unknown wonders of the sea are assembled.

Promontories, forelands, capes, headlands, breakers, and shoals are veritable constructions. The geological changes of the earth are trifling compared with the vast operations of the ocean. These breakers, these habitations in the sea, these pyramids, and spouts of the foam are the practicers of a mysterious art which the author of this book has somewhere called "the Art of Nature." Their style is known by its vastness. The effects of chance seem here design. Its works are multiform. They abound in the mazy entanglement of the rock-coral groves, the sublimity of the cathedral, the extravagance of the pagoda, the amplitude of the mountain, the delicacy of the jeweller's work, the horror of the sepulchre. They are filled with cells like the wasps' nest, with dens like menageries, with subterranean passages like the haunts of moles, with dungeons like Bastiles, with ambuscades like a camp. They have their doors, but they are barricaded; their columns, but they are shattered; their towers, but they are tottering; their bridges, but they are broken. Their compartments are unaccommodating; these are fitted for the birds only, those only for fish. They are impassable. Their architectural style is variable and inconsistent; it regards or disregards at will the laws of equilibrium, breaks off, stops short, begins in the form of an archivolt,

and ends in an architrave, block on block. Enceladus is the mason. A wondrous science of dynamics exhibits here its problems ready solved. Fearful overhanging blocks threaten, but fall not: the human mind cannot guess what power supports their bewildering masses. Blind entrances, gaps, and ponderous suspensions multiply and vary infinitely. The laws which regulate this Babel baffle human induction. The great unknown architect plans nothing, but succeeds in all. Rocks massed together in confusion form a monstrous monument, defy reason, yet maintain equilibrium. Here is something more than strength; it is eternity. But order is wanting. The wild tumult of the waves seem to have passed into the wilderness of stone. It is like a tempest petrified and fixed forever. Nothing is more impressive than that wild architecture; always standing, yet always seeming to fall; in which everything appears to give support, and yet to withdraw it. A struggle between opposing lines has resulted in the construction of an edifice, filled with traces of the efforts of those old antagonists, the ocean and the storm.

This architecture has its terrible masterpieces, of which the Douvres rock was one.

The sea had fashioned and perfected it with a sinister solicitude. The snarling waters licked it into shape. It was hideous, treacherous, dark, full of hollows.

It had a complete system of submarine caverns ramifying and losing themselves in unfathomed depths. Some of the orifices of this labyrinth of passages were left exposed by the low tides. A man might enter there, but at his risk and peril.

Gilliat determined to explore all these grottoes, for the purpose of his salvage labor. There was not one which was not repulsive. Everywhere about the caverns that strange aspect of an abattoir, those singular traces of slaughter, appeared again in all the exaggeration of the ocean. No one who has not seen in excavations of this kind, upon the walls of everlasting granite, these hideous natural frescoes, can form a notion of their singularity.

These pitiless caverns, too, were false and sly. Woe betide him who would loiter there. The rising tide filled them to their roofs.

Rock limpets and edible mosses abounded among them.

They were obstructed by quantities of shingle, heaped together in their recesses. Some of their huge smooth stones weighed more than a ton. They were of every proportion, and of every hue; but the greater part were blood-colored. Some covered with a hairy and glutinous seaweed, seemed like large green moles boring a way into the rock.

Several of the caverns terminated abruptly in the form of a demi-cupola. Others, main arteries of a mysterious circulation, lengthened out in the rock in dark and tortuous fissures. They were the alleys of the submarine city; but they gradually contracted from their entrances, and at length left no way for a man to pass. Peering in by the help of a lighted torch, he could see nothing but dark hollows dripping with moisture.

One day, Gilliatt, exploring, ventured into one of these fissures. The state of the tide favored the attempt. It was a beautiful day of calm and sunshine. There was no fear of any accident from the sea to increase the danger.

Two necessities, as we have said, compelled him to undertake these explorations. He had to gather fragments of wreck and other things to aid him in his labor, and to search for crabs and crayfish for his food. Shell-fish had begun to fail him on the rocks.

The fissure was narrow, and the passage difficult. Gilliatt could see daylight beyond. He made an effort, contorted himself as much as he could, and penetrated into the cave as far as he was able.

He had reached, without suspecting it, the interior of the rock, upon the point of which Clubin had steered the *Durande*. Though abrupt and almost inaccessible without, it was hollowed within. It was full of galleries, pits, and chambers, like the tomb of an Egyptian king. This network of caverns was one of the most complicated of all that labyrinth, a labor of

the water, the undermining of the restless sea. The branches of the subterranean maze probably communicated with the sea without by more than one issue, some gaping at the level of the waves, the others profound and invisible. It was near here, but Gilliatt knew it not, that Clubin had dived into the sea.

In this crocodile cave—where crocodiles, it is true, were not among the dangers—Gilliatt wound about, clambered, struck his head occasionally, bent low and rose again, lost his footing and regained it many times, advancing laboriously. By degrees the gallery widened; a glimmer of daylight appeared, and he found himself suddenly at the entrance to a cavern of a singular kind.

XII.

THE INTERIOR OF AN EDIFICE UNDER THE SEA.

THE gleam of daylight was fortunate.

One step further, and Gilliatt must have fallen into a pool, perhaps without bottom. The waters of these cavern pools are so cold and paralyzing as to prove fatal to the strongest swimmers.

There is, moreover, no means of remounting or of hanging on to any part of their steep walls.

He stopped short. The crevice from which he had just issued ended in a narrow and slippery projection, a species of corbel in the peaked wall. He leaned against the side and surveyed it.

He was in a large cave. Over his head was a roofing not unlike the inside of a vast skull, which might have been imagined to have been recently dissected. The dripping ribs of the striated indentations of the roof seemed to imitate the branching fibres and jagged sutures of the bony cranium. A stony ceiling and a watery floor. The rippled waters between the four walls of the cave were like wavy paving tiles. The grotto was shut in on all sides. Not a window, not even an air-hole visible. No breach in the wall, no crack in the roof. The light came from below and through the water, a strange, sombre light.

Gilliatt, the pupils of whose eyes had contracted during his explorations of the dusky corridor, could distinguish everything about him in the pale glimmer.

He was familiar, from having often visited them, with the caves of Plémont in Jersey, the Creux-Maillé at Guernsey, the Boutiques at Sark ; but none of these marvellous caverns could compare with the subterranean and submarine chamber into which he had made his way.

Under the water at his feet he could see a sort of drowned arch. This arch, a natural ogive fashioned by the waves, was glittering between its two dark and profound supports. It was by this submerged porch that the daylight entered into the cavern from the open sea. A strange light shooting upward from a gulf.

The glimmer spread out beneath the waters like a large fan, and was reflected on the rocks. Its direct rays, divided into long, broad shafts, appeared in strong relief against the darkness below, and becoming brighter or more dull from one rock to another, looked as if seen here and there through plates of glass. There was light in that cave it is true ; but it was the light that was unearthly. The beholder might have dreamed that he had descended in some other planet. The glimmer was an enigma, like the glaucous light from the eye-pupil of a Sphinx. The whole cave represented the interior of a death's-head of enormous proportions, and of a strange splendor. The vault was the hollow of the brain, the arch the mouth ; the sockets of the eyes were wanting. The cavern, alternately swallowing and rendering up the flux and reflux through its mouth wide opened to the full noonday without, seemed to drink in the light and vomit forth bitterness ; a type of some beings intelligent and evil. The light, in traversing this inlet through the vitreous medium of the sea-water, became green, like a ray of starlight from Aldebaran. The water, filled with the moist light, appeared like a liquid emerald. A tint of aqua-marina of marvellous delicacy spread a soft hue throughout the cavern. The roof, with its cerebral lobes, and its rampant ramifications, like the fibres of nerves, gave out a tender

reflection of chrysoprase. The ripples reflected on the roof were falling in order and dissolving again incessantly, and enlarging and contracting their glittering scales in a mysterious and mazy dance. They gave the beholder an impression of something weird and spectral : he wondered what prey secured, or what expectation about to be realized, moved with a joyous thrill this magnificent network of living fire. From the projections of the vault, and the angles of the rock, hung lengths of delicate fibrous plants, bathing their roots probably through the granite in some upper pool of water, and distilling from their silky ends one after the other, a drop of water like a pearl. These drops fell in the water now and then with a gentle splash. The effect of the scene was singular. Nothing more beautiful could be imagined ; nothing more mournful could anywhere be found.

It was a wondrous palace, in which death sat smiling and content.

XIII.

WHAT WAS SEEN THERE ; AND WHAT PERCEIVED DIMLY.

A PLACE of shade, which yet was dazzling to the eyes—such was this surprising cavern.

The beating of the sea made itself felt throughout the cavern. The oscillation without raised and depressed the level of the waters within, with the regularity of respiration. A mysterious spirit seemed to fill this great organism, as it swelled and subsided in silence.

The water had a magical transparency, and Gilliatt distinguished at various depths submerged recesses, and surfaces of jutting rocks ever of a deeper and a deeper green. Certain dark hollows, too, were there, probably too deep for soundings.

On each side of the submarine porch, rude elliptical arches, filled with shallows, indicated the position of small lateral caves, low alcoves of the central cavern, accessible, perhaps, at certain tides. These openings had roofs in the form of inclined planes, and at angles more or less acute.

Little sandy beaches of a few feet wide, laid bare by the action of the water, stretched inward, and were lost in these recesses.

Here and there sea-weeds of more than a fathom in length undulated beneath the water, like the waving of long tresses in the wind; and there were glimpses of a forest of sea plants.

Above and below the surface of the water, the wall of the cavern from top to bottom—from the vault down to the depth at which it became invisible—was tapestried with that prodigious efflorescence of the sea, rarely perceived by human eyes, which the old Spanish navigators called *praderias del mar*. A luxuriant moss, having all the tints of the olive, enlarged and concealed the protuberances of granite. From all the jutting points swung the thin fluted strips of varech, which sailors use as their barometers. The light breath which stirred in the cavern waved to and fro their glossy bands.

Under these vegetations there showed themselves from time to time some of the rarest *bijoux* of the casket of the ocean; ivory shells, strombi, purple-fish, uni-valves, struthiolaires, turriculated cerites. The bell-shaped limpet shells, like tiny huts, were everywhere adhering to the rocks, distributed in settlements, in the alleys between which prowled oscabrions, those beetles of the sea. A few large pebbles found their way into the cavern; shell-fish took refuge there. The crustacea are the grandees of the sea, who, in their lacework and embroidery avoid the rude contact of the pebbly crowd. The glittering heap of their shells, in certain spots under the wave, gave out singular irradiations, amidst which the eye caught glimpses of confused azure and gold, and mother-of-pearl, of every tint of the water.

Upon the side of the cavern, a little above the water-line, a magnificent and singular plant, attaching itself, like a fringe, to the border of sea-weed, continued and completed it. This plant, thick, fibrous, inextricably intertwined, and almost black, exhibited to the eye large confused and dusky festoons, everywhere dotted with innumerable little

flowers of the color of lapis-lazuli. In the water they seemed to glow like small blue flames. Out of the water they were flowers; beneath it they were sapphires. The water rising and inundating the basement of the grotto clothed with these plants, seem to cover the rock with gems.

At every swelling of the wave these flowers increased in splendor, and at every subsidence grew dull again. So it is with the destiny of man; aspiration is life, the outbreathing of the spirit is death.

One of the marvels of the cavern was the rock itself. Forming here a wall, there an arch, and here again a pillar or pilaster, it was in places rough and bare, and sometimes close beside, was wrought with the most delicate natural carving. Strange evidences of mind mingled with the massive stolidity of the granite. It was the wondrous art-work of the ocean. Here a sort of panel, cut square, and covered with round embossments in various positions, simulated a vague bas-relief. Before this sculpture, with its obscure designs, a man might have dreamed of Prometheus roughly sketching for Michael Angelo. It seemed as if that great genius with a few blows of his mallet could have finished the indistinct labors of the giant. In other places the rock was damasked like a Saracen buckler, or engraved like a Florentine vase. There were portions which appeared like Corinthian brass, then like arabesques, as on the door of a mosque; then like Runic stones with obscure and mystic prints of claws. Plants with twisted creepers and tendrils, crossing and recrossing upon the groundwork of golden lichens, covered it with filigree. The grotto resembled in some wise a Moorish palace. It was a union of barbarism and of goldsmith's work, with the imposing and rugged architecture of the elements.

The magnificent stains and moulderings of the sea covered, as with velvet, the angles of granite. The escarpments were festooned with large flowered bindweed, sustaining itself with graceful ease, and ornamenting the walls as by intelligent design. Wall pellitories showed their strange clusters in tasteful arrangement.

The wondrous light which came from beneath the water, at once a submarine twilight and an Elysian radiance, softened down and blended all harsh lineaments. Every wave was a prism. The outlines of things under these rainbow-tinted undulations produced the chromatic effects of optical glasses made too convex. Solar spectra shot through the waters. Fragments of rainbows seemed floating in that transparent dawn. Elsewhere—in other corners—there was discernible a kind of moonlight in the water. Every kind of splendor seemed to mingle there, forming a strange sort of twilight. Nothing could be more perplexing or enigmatical than the sumptuous beauties of this cavern. Enchantment reigned over all. The fantastic vegetation, the rude maso-ny of the place seemed to harmonize.

Was it daylight which entered by this casement beneath the sea? Was it indeed water which trembled in this dusky pool? Were not these arched roofs and porches fashioned out of sunset clouds to imitate a cavern to men's eyes? What stone was that beneath the feet? Was not this solid shaft about to melt and pass into thin air? What was that cunning jewellery of glittering shells, half seen beneath the wave? How far away were life, and the green earth, and human faces? What strange enchantment haunted that mystic twilight? What blind emotion, mingling its sympathies with the uneasy restlessness of plants beneath the wave?

At the extremity of the cavern, which was oblong, rose a Cyclopean archivolte, singularly exact in form. It was a species of cave within a cave, of tabernacle within a sanctuary. Here, behind a sheet of bright verdure, interposed like the veil of a temple, arose a stone out of the waves, having square sides, and bearing some resemblance to an altar. The water surrounded it in all parts. It seemed as if a goddess had just descended from it. One might have dreamed there that some celestial form beneath that crypt or upon that altar dwelt forever pensive in naked beauty, but grew invisible at the approach of mortals. It was hard to conceive that

majestic chamber without a vision within. The day dream of the intruder might evoke again the marvellous apparition. A flood of chaste light falling upon white shoulders scarcely seen; a forehead bathed with the light of dawn; an Olympian visage oval-shaped; a bust full of mysterious grace; arms modestly drooping; tresses unloosened in the aurora; a body delicately modelled of pure whiteness, half wrapped in a sacred cloud, with the glance of a virgin; a Venus rising from the sea, or Eve issuing from chaos; such was the dream which filled the mind.

The beauty of the recess seemed made for this celestial presence. It was for the sake of this deity, this fairy of the pearl caverns, this queen of the Zephyrs, this Grace born of the waves, it was for her—as the mind, at least, imagined—that this subterranean dwelling had been thus religiously walled in, so that nothing might ever trouble the reverent shadows and the majestic silence round about that divine spirit.

Gilliatt, who was a kind of seer amid the secrets of nature, stood there musing and sensible of confused emotions.

Suddenly, at a few feet below him, in the delightful transparence of that water-like liquid jewels, he became sensible of the approach of something of mystic shape. A species of long ragged band was moving amidst the oscillation of the waves. It did not float, but darted about of its own will. It had an object; was advancing somewhere rapidly. The object had something of the form of a jester's bauble with points, which hung flabby and undulating. It seemed covered with a dust incapable of being washed away by the water. It was more than horrible; it was foul. The beholder felt that it was something monstrous. It was a living thing; unless, indeed, it were but an illusion. It seemed to be seeking the darker portion of the cavern, where at last it vanished. The heavy shadows grew darker as its sinister form glided into them, and disappeared.

BOOK II.

THE LABOR.

I.

THE RESOURCES OF ONE WHO HAS NOTHING.

THE cavern did not easily part with its explorers. The entry had been difficult; going back was more difficult still. Gilliatt, however, succeeded in extricating himself; but he did not return there. He had found nothing of what he was in quest of, and he had not the time to indulge curiosity.

He put the forge in operation at once. Tools were wanting; he set to work and made them.

For fuel he had the wreck; for motive force the water; for his bellows the wind; for his anvil a stone; for art his instinct; for power his will.

He entered with ardor upon his sombre labors.

The weather seemed to smile upon his work. It continued to be dry and free from equinoctial gales. The month of March had come, but it was tranquil. The days grew longer. The blue of the sky, the gentleness of all the movements of the scene, the serenity of the noontide, seemed to exclude the idea of mischief. The waves danced merrily in the sunlight. A Judas kiss is the first step to treachery; of such caresses the ocean is prodigal. Her smile, like that of woman's sometimes, cannot be trusted.

There was little wind. The hydraulic bellows worked all the better for that reason. Much wind would have embarrassed rather than aided it. Gilliatt had a saw; he manufactured for himself a file. With the saw he attacked the wood; with the file the metal. Then he availed himself of the two iron hands of the smith—the pincers and the pliers. The pincers gripe, the pliers handle; the one is like the closed hand, the other like the fingers. By degrees he made for himself a number of auxiliaries, and constructed

his armor. With a piece of hoop-wood he made a screen for his forge-fire.

One of his principal labors was the sorting and repair of pulleys. He mended both the blocks and the sheaves of tackle. He cut down the irregularities of all broken joists, and reshaped the extremities. He had, as we have said, for the necessities of his carpentry, a quantity of pieces of wood, stored away, and arranged according to the forms, the dimensions, and the nature of their grain; the oak on one side, the pine on the other; the short pieces like riders, separated from the straight pieces like binding strakes. This formed his reserve of supports and levers, of which he might stand in great need at any moment.

Any one who intends to construct hoisting tackle ought to provide himself with beams and small cables. But that is not sufficient. He must have cordage. Gilliatt restored the cables, large and small. He frayed out the tattered sails, and succeeded in converting them into an excellent yarn, of which he made twine. With this he joined the ropes. The joints, however, were liable to rot. It was necessary, therefore, to hasten to make use of these cables. He had only been able to make white tow, for he was without tar.

The ropes mended, he proceeded to repair the chains.

Thanks to the lateral point of the stone anvil, which served the part of the conoid bicorn, he was able to forge rings rude in shape but strong. With these he fastened together the severed lengths of chains, and made long pieces.

To work at a forge without assistance is something more than troublesome. He succeeded nevertheless. It is true that he had only to forge and shape articles of comparatively small size, which he was able to handle with the pliers in one hand, while he hammered with the other.

He cut into lengths the iron bars of the captain's bridge on which Clubin used to pass to and fro from paddle-box to paddle-box giving his orders; forged at one extremity of each piece a point, and at the other a flat head. By this means he manufactured large nails of about a foot

in length. These nails, much used in pontoon making, are useful in fixing anything in rocks.

What was his object in all these labors? We shall see.

He was several times compelled to renew the blade of his hatchet and the teeth of his saw. For renotching the saw he had manufactured a three-sided file.

Occasionally he made use of the capstan of the *Durande*. The hook of the chain broke: he made another.

By the aid of his pliers and pincers, and by using his chisel as a screwdriver, he set to work to remove the two paddle-wheels of the vessel; an object which he accomplished. This was rendered practicable by reason of a peculiarity in their construction. The paddle-boxes which covered them served him to stow them away. With the planks of these paddle-boxes he made two cases in which he deposited the two paddles, piece by piece, each part being carefully numbered. His lump of chalk became precious for this purpose.

He kept the two cases upon the strongest part of the wreck.

When these preliminaries were completed, he found himself face to face with the great difficulty. The problem of the engine of the *Durande* was now clearly before him.

Taking the paddle-wheels to pieces had proved practicable. It was very different with the machinery.

In the first place, he was almost entirely ignorant of the details of the mechanism. Working thus blindly he might do some irreparable damage. Then, even in attempting to dismember it, if he had ventured on that course, far other tools would be necessary than such as he could fabricate with a cavern for a forge, a wind-draught for bellows, and a stone for an anvil. In attempting, therefore, to take to pieces the machinery, there was the risk of destroying it.

The attempt seemed at first sight wholly impracticable.

The apparent impossibility of the project rose before him like a stone wall, blocking further progress.

What was to be done?

II.

PREPARATIONS.

GILLIATT had a notion.

Since the time of the carpenter-mason of Salbris, who, in the sixteenth century, in the dark ages of science—long before Amontons had discovered the first law of electricity, or Lahire the second, or Coulomb the third—without other helper than a child, his son, with ill-fashioned tools, in the chamber of the great clock of La Charité-sur-Loire, resolved at one stroke five or six problems in statics and dynamics inextricably interwoven like the wheels in a block of carts and wagons—since the time of that grand and marvellous achievement of the poor workman, who found means, without breaking a single piece of wire, without throwing one of the teeth of the wheels out of gear, to lower in one piece, by a marvellous simplification, from the second story of the clock-tower to the first, that massive monitor of the hours, made all of iron and brass, “large as the room in which the man watches at night from the tower,” with its motions, its cylinders, its barrels, its drum, its hooks, and its weights, the barrel of its spring steel-yard, its horizontal pendulum, the hold-fasts of its escapement, its reels of large and small chains, its stone weights, one of which weighed five hundred pounds, its bells, its peals, its jacks that strike the hours—since the days, I say, of the man who accomplished this miracle, and of whom posterity knows not even the name—nothing that could be compared with the project which Gilliatt was meditating had ever been attempted.

The ponderousness, the delicacy, the involvement of the difficulties were not less in the machinery of the *Durande* than in the clock of La Charité-sur-Loire.

The untaught mechanic had his help-mate—his son; Gilliatt was alone.

A crowd gathered together from Meung-sur-Loire, from Nevers, and even from Orleans, able at time of need to assist the mason of Salbris, and to encourage him with their friendly voices. Gilliatt had around him no voices but those of the wind; no crowd but the assemblage of waves.

There is nothing more remarkable than the timidity of ignorance, unless it be its temerity. When ignorance becomes daring, she has sometimes a sort of compass within herself—the intuition of the truth, clearer oftentimes in a simple mind than in a learned brain.

Ignorance invites to an attempt. It is a state of wonderment, which, with its concomitant curiosity, forms a power. Knowledge often enough disconcerts and makes overcautious. Gama, had he known what lay before him, would have recoiled before the Cape of Storms. If Columbus had been a great geographer, he might have failed to discover America.

The second successful climber of Mont Blanc was the savant, Saussure; the first the goatherd, Balmat.

These instances I admit are exceptions, which detract nothing from science, which remains the rule. The ignorant man may discover; it is the learned who invent.

The sloop was still at anchor in the creek of "The Man" rock, where the sea left it in peace. Gilliatt, as will be remembered, had arranged everything for maintaining constant communication with it. He visited the sloop and measured her beam carefully in several parts, but particularly her midship frame. Then he returned to the *Durande* and measured the diameter of the floor of the engine-room. This diameter, of course, without the paddles, was two feet less than the broadest part of the deck of his bark. The machinery, therefore, might be put aboard the sloop.

But how could it be got there?

III.

GILLIATT'S MASTERPIECE COMES TO THE RESCUE OF LETHIERRY.

ANY fisherman who had been mad enough to loiter in that season in the neighborhood of Gilliatt's labors about this time would have been repaid for his hardihood, by a singular sight between the two Douvres.

Before his eyes would have appeared four stout beams, at equal distances,

stretching from one Douvre to the other, and apparently forced into the rock, which is the firmest of all holds. On the Little Douvre, their extremities were laid and buttressed upon the projections of rock. On the Great Douvre, they had been driven in by blows of a hammer, by the powerful hand of a workman standing upright upon the beam itself. These supports were a little longer than the distance between the rocks. Hence the firmness of their hold; and hence, also, their slanting position. They touched the Great Douvre at an acute, and the Little Douvre at an obtuse angle. Their inclination was only slight; but it was unequal, which was a defect. But for this defect, they might have been supposed to be prepared to receive the planking of a deck. To these four beams were attached four sets of hoisting apparatus, each having its pendent and its tackle-fall, with the bold peculiarity of having the tackle-blocks with two sheaves at one extremity of the beam, and the simple pulleys at the opposite end. This distance, which was too great not to be perilous, was necessitated by the operations to be effected. The blocks were firm, and the pulleys strong. To this tackle-gear cables were attached, which from a distance looked like threads; while beneath this apparatus of tackle and carpentry, in the air, the massive hull of the *Durande* seemed suspended by threads.

She was not yet suspended, however. Under the cross beams, eight perpendicular holes had been made in the deck, four on the port, and four on the starboard side of the engine; eight other holes had been made beneath them through the keel. The cables, descending vertically from the four tackle-blocks, through the deck, passed out at the keel, and under the machinery, re-entered the ship by the holes on the other side, and passing again upward through the deck, returned, and were wound round the beams. Here a sort of jigger-tackle held them in a bunch bound fast to a single cable, capable of being directed by one arm. The single cable passed over a hook, and through a deadeye, which completed the apparatus,

and kept it in check. This combination compelled the four tacklings to work together, and acting as a complete restraint upon the suspending powers, became a sort of dynamical rudder in the hand of the pilot of the operation, maintaining the movements in equilibrium. The ingenious adjustment of this system of tackling had some of the simplifying qualities of the Weston pulley of these times, with a mixture of the antique polyspaston of Vitruvius. Gilliatt had discovered this, although he knew nothing of the dead Vitruvius or of the still unborn Weston. The length of the cables varied, according to the unequal declivity of the cross-beams. The ropes were dangerous, for the untarred hemp was liable to give way. Chains would have been better in this respect, but chains would not have passed well through the tackle-blocks.

The apparatus was full of defects; but as the work of one man, it was surprising. For the rest, it will be understood that many details are omitted which would render the construction perhaps intelligible to practical mechanics, but obscure to others.

The top of the funnel passed between the two beams in the middle.

Gilliatt, without suspecting it, had reconstructed, three centuries later, the mechanism of the Salbris carpenter—a mechanism rude and incorrect, and hazardous for him who would dare to use it.

Here let us remark, that the rudest defects do not prevent a mechanism from working well or ill. It may limp, but it moves. The obelisk in the square of St. Peter's at Rome is erected in a way which offends against all the principles of statics. The carriage of the Czar Peter was so constructed that it appeared about to overturn at every step; but it travelled onward for all that. What deformities are there in the machinery of Marly! Everything that is heterodox in hydraulics. Yet it did not supply Louis XIV. the less with water.

Come what might, Gilliatt had faith. He had even anticipated success so confidently as to fix in the bulwarks of the

sloop, on the day when he measured its proportions, two pairs of corresponding iron rings on each side, exactly at the same distances as the four rings on board the *Durande*, to which were attached the four chains of the funnel.

He had in his mind a very complete and settled plan. All the chances being against him, he had evidently determined that all the precautions at least should be on his side.

He did some things which seemed useless; a sign of attentive premeditation.

His manner of proceeding would, as we have said, have puzzled an observer, even though familiar with mechanical operations.

A witness of his labor who had seen him, for example, with enormous efforts, and at the risk of breaking his neck, driving with blows of his hammer eight or ten great nails which he had forged into the base of the two *Douvres* at the entrance of the defile between them, would have had some difficulty in understanding the object of these nails, and would probably have wondered what could be the use of all that trouble.

If he had then seen him measuring the portion of the fore bulwark which had remained, as we have described it, hanging on by the wreck, then attaching a strong cable to the upper edge of that portion, cutting away with strokes of his hatchet the dislocated fastenings which held it, then dragging it out of the defile, pushing the lower part by the aid of the receding tide, while he dragged the upper part; finally, by great labor, fastening with the cable this heavy mass of planks and piles wider than the entrance of the defile itself, with the nails driven into the base of the Little *Douvre*, the observer would perhaps have found it still more difficult to comprehend, and might have wondered why Gilliatt, if he wanted for the purpose of his operations to disencumber the space between the two rocks of this mass, had not allowed it to fall into the sea, where the tide would have carried it away.

Gilliatt had probably his reasons.

In fixing the nails in the basement of

the rocks, he had taken advantage of all the cracks in the granite, enlarged them where needful, and driven in first of all wedges of wood, in which he fixed the nails. He made a rough commencement of similar preparations in the two rocks which rose at the other extremity of the narrow passage on the eastern side. He furnished with plugs of wood all the crevices, as if he desired to keep these also ready to hold nails or clamps; but this appeared to be a simple precaution, for he did not use them further. He was compelled to economize, and only to use his materials as he had need, and at the moment when the necessity for them came. This was another addition to his numerous difficulties.

As fast as one labor was accomplished another became necessary. Gilliatt passed without hesitation from task to task, and resolutely accomplished his giant strides.

IV.

SUB RE.

THE aspect of the man who accomplished all these labors became terrible.

Gilliatt in his multifarious tasks expended all his strength at once, and regained it with difficulty.

Privations on the one hand, lassitude on the other, had much reduced him. His hair and beard had grown long. He had but one shirt which was not in rags. He went about naked-footed, the wind having carried away one of his shoes and the sea the other. Fractures of the rude and dangerous stone anvil which he used had left small wounds upon his hands and arms, the marks of labor. These wounds, or rather scratches, were superficial; but the keen air and the salt sea irritated them continually.

He was generally hungry, thirsty, and cold.

His store of fresh water was gone; his rye-meal was used or eaten. He had nothing left but a little biscuit.

This he broke with his teeth, having no water in which to steep it.

By little and little, and day by day, his powers decreased.

The terrible rocks were consuming his existence.

How to obtain food was a problem; how to get drink was a problem; how to find rest was a problem.

He ate when he was fortunate enough to find a crayfish or a crab; he drank when he chanced to see a sea-bird descend upon a point of rock; for on climbing up to the spot he generally found there a hollow with a little fresh water. He drank from it after the bird; sometimes with the bird; for the gulls and sea-mews had become accustomed to him, and no longer flew away at his approach. Even in his greatest need of food he did not attempt to molest them. He had, as will be remembered, a superstition about birds. The birds on their part—now that his hair was rough and wild and his beard long—had no fear of him. The change in his face gave them confidence; he had lost resemblance to men, and taken the form of the wild beast.

The birds and Gilliatt, in fact, had become good friends. Companions in poverty, they helped each other. As long as he had had any meal, he had crumbled for them some little bits of the cakes he made. In his deeper distress they showed him in their turn the places where he might find the little pools of water.

He ate the shell-fish raw. Shell-fish help in a certain degree to quench the thirst. The crabs he cooked. Having no kettle, he roasted them between two stones made red-hot in his fire, after the manner of the savages of the Feroe islands.

Meanwhile signs of the equinoctial season had begun to appear. There came rain—an angry rain. No showers or steady torrents, but fine, sharp, icy, penetrating points which pierced to his skin through his clothing, and to his bones through his skin. It was a rain which yielded little water for drinking, but which drenched him none the less.

Chary of assistance, prodigal of misery—such was the character of these rains. During one week Gilliatt suffered from them all day and all night.

At night, in his rocky recess, nothing

but the overpowering fatigue of his daily work enabled him to get sleep. The great sea-gnats stung him, and he awakened covered with blisters.

He had a kind of low fever which sustained him; this fever is a succor which destroys. By instinct he chewed the mosses, or sucked the leaves of wild cochlearia, scanty tufts of which grew in the dry crevices of the rocks. Of his suffering, however, he took little heed. He had no time to spare from his work to the consideration of his own privations. The rescue of the machinery of the *Durande* was progressing well. That sufficed for him.

Every now and then, for the necessities of his work, he jumped into the water, swam to some point, and gained a footing again. He simply plunged into the sea and left it, as a man passes from one room in his dwelling to another.

His clothing was never dry. It was saturated with rain water, which had no time to evaporate, and with sea water, which never dries. He lived perpetually wet.

Living in wet clothing is a habit which may be acquired. The poor groups of Irish people—old men, mothers, girls almost naked, and infants—who pass the winter in the open air, under the snow and rain, huddled together, sometimes at the corners of houses in the streets of London, live and die in this condition.

To be soaked with wet, and yet to be thirsty: Gilliatt grew familiar with this strange torture. There were times when he was glad to suck the sleeve of his loose coat.

The fire which he made scarcely warmed him. A fire in open air yields little comfort. It burns on one side, and freezes on the other.

Gilliatt often shivered even while sweating over his forge.

Everywhere about him rose resistance amidst a terrible silence. He felt himself the enemy of an unseen combination. There is a dismal *non possumus* in nature. The inertia of matter is like a sullen threat. A mysterious persecution environed him. He suffered from heats and

shiverings. The fire ate into his flesh; the water froze him; feverish thirst tormented him; the wind tore his clothing; hunger undermined the organs of the body. The oppression of all these things was constantly exhausting him. Obstacles silent, immense, seemed to converge from all points, with the blind irresponsibility of fate, yet full of a savage unanimity. He felt them pressing inexorably upon him. No means were there of escaping from them. His sufferings produced the impression of some living persecutor. He had a constant sense of something working against him, of a hostile form ever present, ever laboring to circumvent and to subdue him. He could have fled from the struggle; but since he remained, he had no choice but to war with this impenetrable hostility. He asked himself what it was. It took hold of him, grasped him tightly, overpowered him, deprived him of breath. The invisible persecutor was destroying him by slow degrees. Every day the oppression became greater, as if a mysterious screw had received another turn.

His situation in this dreadful spot resembled a duel, in which a suspicion of some treachery haunts the mind of one of the combatants.

Now it seemed a coalition of obscure forces which surrounded him. He felt that there was somewhere a determination to be rid of his presence. It is thus that the glacier chases the loitering ice-block.

Almost without seeming to touch him this latent coalition had reduced him to rags; had left him bleeding, distressed, and, as it were, *hors de combat*, even before the battle. He labored, indeed, not the less—without pause or rest; but as the work advanced, the workman himself lost ground. It might have been fancied that Nature, dreading his bold spirit, adopted the plan of slowly undermining his bodily power. Gilliatt kept his ground, and left the rest to the future. The sea had begun by consuming him; what would come next?

The double Douvres—that dragon made of granite, and lying in ambush in mid-

ocean—had sheltered him. It had allowed him to enter, and to do his will; but its hospitality resembled the welcome of devouring jaws.

The desert, the boundless surface, the unfathomable space around him and above, so full of negatives to man's will; the mute, inexorable determination of phenomena following their appointed course; the grand general law of things, implacable and passive; the ebbs and flows; the rocks themselves, dark Pleiades whose points were each a star amid vortices, a centre of an irradiation of currents; the strange, indefinable conspiracy to stifle with indifference the temerity of a living being; the wintry winds, the clouds, and the beleaguering waves enveloped him, closed round him slowly, and in a measure shut him in, and separated him from companionship, like a dungeon built up by degrees round a living man. All against him; nothing for him; he felt himself isolated, abandoned, enfeebled, sapped, forgotten. His storehouse empty, his tools broken or defective; he was tormented with hunger and thirst by day, with cold by night. His sufferings had left him with wounds and tatters, rags covering sores, torn hands, bleeding feet, wasted limbs, pallid cheeks, and eyes bright with a strange light; but this was the steady flame of his determination.

All his efforts seemed to tend to the impossible. His success was trifling and slow. He was compelled to expend much labor for very little results. This it was that gave to his struggle its noble and pathetic character.

That it should have required so many preparations, so much toil, so many cautious experiments, such nights of hardship, and such days of danger, merely to set up four beams over a shipwrecked vessel, to divide and isolate the portion that could be saved, and to adjust to that wreck within a wreck four tackle-blocks with their cables was only the result of his solitary labor.

That solitary position Gilliatt had more than accepted; he had deliberately chosen it. Dreading a competitor, because a competitor might have proved a rival, he

had sought for no assistance. The overwhelming enterprise, the risk, the danger, the toil multiplied by itself, the possible destruction of the salvor in his work, famine, fever, nakedness, distress—he had chosen all these for himself! Such was his selfishness. He was like a man placed in some terrible chamber, which is being slowly exhausted of air. His vitality was leaving him by little and little. He scarcely perceived it.

Exhaustion of the bodily strength does not necessarily exhaust the will. Faith is only a secondary power; the will is the first. The mountains, which faith is proverbially said to move, are nothing beside that which the will can accomplish. All that Gilliatt lost in vigor, he gained in tenacity. The destruction of the physical man under the oppressive influence of that wild surrounding sea, and rock, and sky, seemed only to reinvigorate his moral nature.

Gilliatt felt no fatigue; or, rather, would not yield to any. The refusal of the mind to recognize the failings of the body is in itself an immense power.

He saw nothing except the steps in the progress of his labors.

His object—now seeming so near attainment—wrapped him in perpetual illusions.

He endured all this suffering without any other thought than is comprised in the word "Forward." His work flew to his head; the strength of the will is intoxicating. Its intoxication is called heroism.

He had become a kind of Job, having the ocean for the scene of his sufferings. But he was a Job wrestling with difficulty, a Job combating and making head against afflictions; a Job conquering; a combination of Job and Prometheus, if such names are not too great to be applied to a poor sailor and fisher of crabs and crayfish.

V.

SUB UMBRA.

SOMETIMES in the night-time Gilliatt woke and peered into the darkness.

He felt a strange emotion.

His eyes were opened upon the black night; the situation was dismal; full of disquietude.

There is such a thing as the pressure of darkness.

A strange roof of shadow; a deep obscurity, which no diver can explore; a light mingled with that obscurity, of a strange, subdued, and sombre kind: floating atoms of rays like a dust of seeds or of ashes; millions of lamps, but no illuminating; a vast sprinkling of fire, of which no man knows the secret; a diffusion of shining points, like a drift of sparks arrested in their course; the disorder of the whirlwind, with the fixedness of death; a mysterious and abyssmal depth; an enigma, at once showing and concealing its face; the Infinite in its mask of darkness—these are the synonyms of night. Its weight lies heavily on the soul of man.

This union of all mysteries—the mystery of the Cosmos and the mystery of Fate—oppresses human reason.

The pressure of darkness acts in inverse proportion upon different kinds of natures. In the presence of night man feels his own incompleteness. He perceives the dark void and is sensible of infirmity. It is like the vacancy of blindness. Face to face with night, man bends, kneels, prostrates himself, crouches on the earth, crawls towards a cave, or seeks for wings. Almost always he shrinks from that vague presence of the Infinite Unknown. He asks himself what it is; he trembles and bows the head. Sometimes he desires to go to it.

To go whither?

He can only answer, "Yonder."

But what is that? and what is there?

This curiosity is evidently forbidden to the spirit of man; for all around him the roads which bridge that gulf are broken up or gone. No arch exists for him to span the Infinite. But there is attraction in forbidden knowledge, as in the edge of the abyss. Where the footstep cannot tread, the eye may reach; where the eye can penetrate no further, the mind may soar. There is no man, however feeble or insufficient his resources, who does not

essay. According to his nature he questions or recoils before that mystery. With some it has the effect of repressing; with others it enlarges the soul. The spectacle is sombre, indefinite.

Is the night calm and cloudless? It is then a depth of shadow. Is it stormy? It is then a sea of cloud. Its limitless depths reveal themselves to us, and yet baffle our gaze: close themselves against research, but open to conjecture. Its innumerable dots of light only make deeper the obscurity beyond. Jewels, scintillations, stars; existences revealed in the unknown universes; dread defiances to man's approach; landmarks of the infinite creation; boundaries there, where there are no bounds; sea-marks impossible, and yet real, numbering the fathoms of those infinite depths. One microscopic glittering point; then another; then another; imperceptible, yet enormous. Yonder light is a focus; that focus is a star; that star is a sun; that sun is a universe; that universe is nothing. For all numbers are as zero in the presence of the Infinite.

These worlds, which yet are nothing, exist. Through this fact we feel the difference which separates the *being nothing* from the *not to be*.

All these vague imaginings, increased and intensified by solitude, weighed upon Gilliatt.

He understood them little, but he felt them. His was a powerful intellect clouded; a great spirit wild and untaught.

VI.

GILLIATT PLACES THE SLOOP IN READINESS.

THIS rescue of the machinery of the wreck as meditated by Gilliatt was, as we have already said, like the escape of a criminal from a prison—necessitating all the patience and industry recorded of such achievements; industry carried to the point of a miracle, patience only to be compared with a long agony. A certain prisoner named Thomas, at the Mont Saint Michel, found means of secreting the greater part of a wall in his paillasse. Another

at Tulle, in 1820, cut away a quantity of lead from the terrace where the prisoners walked for exercise. With what kind of knife? No one would guess. And melted this lead with what fire? None have ever discovered; but it is known that he cast it in a mould made of the crumb of bread. With this lead and this mould he made a key, and with this key succeeded in opening a lock of which he had never seen anything but the keyhole. Some of this marvellous ingenuity Gilliatt possessed. He had once climbed and descended from the cliff at Boisrosé. He was the Baron Trenck of the wreck, and the Latude of her machinery.

The sea, like a jailor, kept watch over him.

For the rest, mischievous and inclement as the rain had been, he had contrived to derive some benefit from it. He had in part replenished his stock of fresh water; but his thirst was inextinguishable, and he emptied his can as fast as he filled it.

One day—it was on the last day of April or the first of May—all was at length ready for his purpose.

The engine-room was as it were enclosed between the eight cables hanging from the tackle-blocks, four on one side, four on the other. The sixteen holes upon the deck and under the keel, through which the cables passed, had been hooped round by sawing. The planking had been sawed, the timber cut with the hatchet, the iron-work with a file, the sheathing with the chisel. The part of the keel immediately under the machinery was cut squarewise, and ready to descend with it while still supporting it. All this frightful swinging mass was held only by one chain, which was itself only kept in position by a filed notch. At this stage, in such a labor and so near its completion, haste is prudence.

The water was low; the moment favorable.

Gilliatt had succeeded in removing the axle of the paddles, the extremities of which might have proved an obstacle and checked the descent. He had contrived to make this heavy portion fast in a vertical position within the engine-room itself.

It was time to bring his work to an end.

The workman, as we have said, was not weary, for his will was strong; but his tools were. The forge was by degrees becoming impracticable. The blower had begun to work badly. The little hydraulic fall being of sea-water, saline deposits had encrusted the joints of the apparatus, and prevented its free action.

Gilliatt visited the creek of "The Man" rock, examined the sloop, and assured himself that all was in good condition, particularly the four rings fixed to starboard and to larboard; then he weighed anchor, and worked the heavy barge-shaped craft with the oars till he brought it alongside the two Douvres. The defile between the rocks was wide enough to admit it. There was also depth enough. On the day of his arrival he had satisfied himself that it was possible to push the sloop under the Durande.

The feat, however, was difficult; it required the minute precision of a watch-maker. The operation was all the more delicate from the fact that, for his objects, he was compelled to force it in by the stern, rudder first. It was necessary that the mast and the rigging of the sloop should project beyond the wreck in the direction of the sea.

These embarrassments rendered all Gilliatt's operations awkward. It was not like entering the creek of "The Man," where it was a mere affair of the tiller. It was necessary here to push, drag, row, and take soundings all together. Gilliatt consumed but a quarter of an hour in these manœuvres; but he was successful.

In fifteen or twenty minutes the sloop was adjusted under the wreck. It was almost wedged in there. By means of his two anchors he moored the boat by head and stern. The strongest of the two was placed so as to be efficient against the strongest wind that blows, which was that from the southwest. Then by the aid of a lever and the capstan, he lowered into the sloop the two cases containing the pieces of the paddle-wheel, the slings of which were all ready. The two cases served as ballast.

Relieved of these encumbrances, he fastened to the hook of the chain of the

capstan the sling of the regulating tackle-gear, intending to check the pulleys.

Owing to the peculiar objects of this labor, the defects of the old sloop became useful qualities. It had no deck; her burden therefore would have greater depth, and could rest upon the hold. Her mast was very forward—too far forward indeed for general purposes; her contents, therefore, would have more room, and the mast standing thus beyond the mass of the wreck, there would be nothing to hinder its disembarkation. It was a mere shell, or case for receiving it; but nothing is more stable than this on the sea.

While engaged in these operations, Gilliatt suddenly perceived that the sea was rising. He looked around to see from what quarter the wind was coming.

VII.

SUDDEN DANGER.

THE breeze was scarcely perceptible; but what there was came from the west. A disagreeable habit of the winds during the equinoxes.

The rising sea varies much in its effects upon the Douvres rocks, depending upon the quarter of the wind.

According to the gale which drives them before it, the waves enter the rocky corridor either from the east or from the west. Entering from the east, the sea is comparatively gentle; coming from the west, it is always furious. The reason of this is, that the wind from the east blowing from the land has not had time to gather force; while the westerly winds, coming from the Atlantic, blow unchecked from a vast ocean. Even a very slight breeze, if it comes from the west, is serious. It rolls the huge billows from the illimitable space and dashes the waves against the narrow defile in greater bulk than can find entrance there.

A sea which rolls into a gulf is always terrible. It is the same with a crowd of people: a multitude is a sort of fluid body. When the quantity which can enter is less

than the quantity endeavoring to force a way, there is a fatal crush among the crowd, a fierce convulsion on the water. As long as the west wind blows, however slight the breeze, the Douvres are twice a day subjected to that rude assault. The sea rises, the tide breasts up, the narrow gullet gives little entrance, the waves, driven against it violently, rebound and roar, and a tremendous surf beats the two sides of the gorge. Thus the Douvres, during the slightest wind from the west, present the singular spectacle of a sea comparatively calm without, while within the rocks a storm is raging. This tumult of waters, altogether confined and circumscribed, has nothing of the character of a tempest. It is a mere local outbreak among the waves, but a terrible one. As regards the winds from the north and south, they strike the rocks crosswise, and cause little surf in the passage. The entrance by the east, a fact which must be borne in mind, was close to "The Man" rock. The dangerous opening to the west was at the opposite extremity, exactly between the two Douvres.

It was at this western entrance that Gilliatt found himself with the wrecked Durande, and the sloop made fast beneath it.

A catastrophe seemed inevitable. There was not much wind, but it was sufficient for the impending mischief.

Before many hours, the swell which was rising would be rushing with full force into the gorge of the Douvres. The first waves were already breaking. This swell, and eddy of the entire Atlantic, would have behind it the immense sea. There would be no squall; no violence, but a simple overwhelming wave, which, commencing on the coasts of America, rolls towards the shores of Europe with an impetus gathered over two thousand leagues. This wave, a gigantic ocean barrier, meeting the gap of the rocks, must be caught between the two Douvres, standing like watch-towers at the entrance, or like pillars of the defile. Thus swelled by the tide, augmented by resistance, driven back by the shoals, and urged on by the wind, it would strike the rock with vio-

lence, and with all the contortions from the obstacles it had encountered, and all the frenzy of a sea confined in limits, would rush between the rocky walls, where it would reach the sloop and the *Durande*, and, in all probability, destroy them.

A shield against this danger was wanting. Gilliatt had one.

The problem was to prevent the sea reaching it at one bound; to obstruct it from striking, while allowing it to rise; to bar the passage without refusing it admission; to prevent the compression of the water in the gorge, which was the whole danger; to turn an eruption into a simple flood; to extract as it were from the waves all their violence, and constrain the furies to be gentle; it was, in fact, to substitute an obstacle which will appease, for an obstacle which irritates.

Gilliatt, with all that dexterity which he possessed, and which is so much more efficient than mere force, sprang upon the rocks like a chamois among the mountains or a monkey in the forest; using for his tottering and dizzy strides the smallest projecting stone; leaping into the water, and issuing from it again; swimming among the shoals and clambering the rocks, with a rope between his teeth and a mallet in his hand. Thus he detached the cable which kept suspended and also fast to the basement of the Little *Douvre* the end of the forward side of the *Durande*; fashioned out of some ends of hawsers a sort of hinges, holding this bulwark to the huge nails fixed in the granite; swung this apparatus of planks upon them, like the gates of a great dock, and turned their sides, as he would turn a rudder, outward to the waves, which pushed the extremities upon the Great *Douvre*, while the rope hinges detained the other extremities upon the Little *Douvre*; next he contrived, by means of the huge nails placed beforehand for the purpose, to fix the same kind of fastenings upon the Great *Douvre* as on the little one; made completely fast the vast mass of woodwork against the two pillars of the gorge, slung a chain across this barrier like a baldric upon a cuirass; and in less than an hour, this barricade against the sea was complete, and the

gullet of the rocks closed as by a folding-door.

This powerful apparatus, a heavy mass of beams and planks, which laid flat would have made a raft, and upright formed a wall, had by the aid of the water been handled by Gilliatt with the adroitness of a juggler. It might almost have been said that the obstruction was complete before the rising sea had the time to perceive it.

It was one of those occasions on which Jean Bart would have employed the famous expression which he applied to the sea every time he narrowly escaped shipwreck. "We have cheated the Englishman;" for it is well known that when that famous admiral meant to speak contemptuously of the ocean he called it "the Englishman."

The entrance to the defile being thus protected, Gilliatt thought of the sloop. He loosened sufficient cable for the two anchors to allow her to rise with the tide; an operation similar to what the mariners of old called "*mouiller avec des embossures*." In all this, Gilliatt was not taken the least by surprise; the necessity had been foreseen. A seaman would have perceived it by the two pulleys of the top ropes cut in the form of snatch-blocks, and fixed behind the sloop, through which passed two ropes, the ends of which were slung through the rings of the anchors.

Meanwhile the tide was rising fast; the half flood had arrived, a moment when the shock of the waves, even in comparatively moderate weather, may become considerable. Exactly what Gilliatt expected came to pass. The waves rolled violently against the barrier, struck it, broke heavily and passed beneath. Outside was the heavy swell; within, the waters ran quietly. He had devised a sort of marine *Furculæ caudineæ*. The sea was conquered.

VIII.

MOVEMENT RATHER THAN PROGRESS.

THE moment so long dreaded had come. The problem now was to place the machinery in the bark.

Gilliatt remained thoughtful for some

moments, holding the elbow of his left arm in his right hand, and applying his left hand to his forehead.

Then he climbed upon the wreck, one part of which, containing the engine, was to be parted from it, while the other remained.

He severed the four slings which fixed the four chains from the funnel on the larboard and the starboard sides. The slings being only of cord, his knife served him well enough for this purpose.

The four chains, set free, hung down along the sides of the funnel.

From the wreck he climbed up to the apparatus which he had constructed, stamped with his feet upon the beams, inspected the tackle-blocks, looked to the pulleys, handled the cables, examined the eking-pieces, assured himself that the untarred hemp was not saturated through, found that nothing was wanting and nothing giving way; then springing from the height of the suspending props on to the deck, he took up his position near the capstan, in the part of the *Durande* which he intended to leave jammed in between the two *Douvres*. This was to be his post during his labors.

Earnest, but troubled with no impulses but what were useful to his work, he took a final glance at the hoisting-tackle, then seized a file and began to saw with it through the chain which held the whole suspended.

The rasping of the file was audible amidst the roaring of the sea.

The chain from the capstan, attached to the regulating gear, was within his reach, quite near his hand.

Suddenly there was a crash. The link which he was filing snapped when only half cut through; the whole apparatus swung violently. He had only just time sufficient to seize the regulating gear.

The severed chain beat against the rock; the eight cables strained; the huge mass, sawed and cut through, detached itself from the wreck; the belly of the hull opened, and the iron flooring of the engine-room was visible below the keel.

If he had not seized the regulating tackle at that instant it would have fallen.

But his powerful hand was there, and it descended steadily.

When the brother of Jean Bart, Peter Bart, that powerful and sagacious toper, that poor Dunkirk fisherman, who used to talk familiarly with the Grand Admiral of France, went to the rescue of the galley *Langeron*, in distress in the Bay of Ambleteuse, endeavoring to save the heavy floating mass in the midst of the breakers of that furious bay, he rolled up the mainsail, tied it with sea-reeds, and trusted to the ties to break away of themselves, and give the sail to the wind at the right moment. Just so Gilliatt trusted to the breaking of the chain; and the same eccentric feat of daring was crowned with the same success.

The tackle, taken in hand by Gilliatt, held out and worked well. Its function, as will be remembered, was to moderate the powers of the apparatus, thus reduced from many to one, by bringing them into united action. The gear had some similarity to a bridle of a bowline, except that instead of trimming a sail it served to balance a complicated mechanism.

Erect, and with his hand upon the capstan, Gilliatt, so to speak, was enabled to feel the pulse of the apparatus.

It was here that his inventive genius manifested itself.

A remarkable coincidence of forces was the result.

While the machinery of the *Durande*, detached in a mass, was lowering to the sloop, the sloop rose slowly to receive it. The wreck and the salvage vessel assisting each other in opposite ways, saved half the labor of the operation.

The tide swelling quietly between the two *Douvres* raised the sloop and brought it nearer to the *Durande*. The sea was more than conquered; it was tamed and broken in. It became, in fact, part and parcel of the organization of power.

The rising waters lifted the vessel without any sort of shock, gently, and almost with precaution, as one would handle porcelain.

Gilliatt combined and proportioned the two labors, that of the water and that of the apparatus; and standing steadfast

at the capstan, like some terrible statue obeyed by all the movements around it at the same moment, regulated the slowness of the descent by the slow rise of the sea.

There was no jerk given by the waters, no slip among the tackle. It was a strange collaboration of all the natural forces subdued. On one side, gravitation lowering the huge bulk, on the other the sea raising the bark. The attraction of heavenly bodies which causes the tide, and the attractive force of the earth, which men call weight, seemed to conspire together to aid his plans. There was no hesitation, no stoppage in their service; under the dominance of mind these passive forces became active auxiliaries. From minute to minute the work advanced; the interval between the wreck and the sloop diminished insensibly. The approach continued in silence, and as in a sort of terror of the man who stood there. The elements received his orders and fulfilled them.

Nearly at the moment when the tide ceased to raise it, the cable ceased to slide. Suddenly, but without commotion, the pulleys stopped. The vast machine had taken its place in the bark, as if placed there by a powerful hand. It stood straight, upright, motionless, firm. The iron floor of the engine-room rested with its four corners evenly upon the hold.

The work was accomplished.

Gilliatt contemplated it, lost in thought.

He was not the spoiled child of success. He bent under the weight of his great joy. He felt his limbs, as it were, sinking; and contemplating his triumph, he, who had never been shaken by danger, began to tremble.

He gazed upon the sloop under the wreck and at the machinery in the sloop. He seemed to feel it hard to believe it true. It might have been supposed that he had never looked forward to that which he had accomplished. A miracle had been wrought by his hands, and he contemplated it in bewilderment.

His reverie lasted but a short time.

Starting like one awakening from a deep sleep, he seized his saw, cut the eight cables, separated now from the sloop,

thanks to the rising of the tide, by only about ten feet; sprang aboard, took a bunch of cord, made four slings, passed them through the rings prepared beforehand, and fixed on both sides aboard the sloop the four chains of the funnel which only an hour before had been still fastened to their places aboard the *Durande*.

The funnel being secured, he disengaged the upper part of the machinery. A square portion of the planking of the *Durande* was adhering to it; he struck off the nails and relieved the sloop of this encumbrance of planks and beams; which fell over on to the rocks—a great assistance in lightening it.

For the rest, the sloop, as has been foreseen, behaved well under the burden of the machinery. It had sunk in the water, but only to a good water-line. Although massive, the engine of the *Durande* was less heavy than the pile of stones and the cannon which he had once brought back from *Herm* in the sloop.

All then was ended; he had only to depart.

IX.

A SLIP BETWEEN CUP AND LIP.

ALL was not ended.

To reopen the gorge thus closed by the portion of the *Durande's* bulwarks, and at once to push out with the sloop beyond the rocks, nothing could appear more clear and simple. On the ocean every minute is urgent. There was little wind; scarcely a wrinkle on the open sea. The afternoon was beautiful, and promised a fine night. The sea, indeed, was calm, but the ebb had begun. The moment was favorable for starting. There would be the ebb-tide for leaving the *Douvres*; and the flood would carry him into *Guernsey*. It would be possible to be at *St. Sampson's* at day-break.

But an unexpected obstacle presented itself. There was a flaw in his arrangements which had baffled all his foresight.

The machinery was freed; but the chimney was not.

The tide, by raising the sloop to the wreck suspended in the air, had dimin-

ished the dangers of the descent, and abridged the labor. But this diminution of the interval had left the top of the funnel entangled in the kind of gaping frame formed by the open hull of the *Durande*. The funnel was held fast there as between four walls.

The services rendered by the sea had been accompanied by that unfortunate drawback. It seemed as if the waves, constrained to obey, had avenged themselves by a malicious trick.

It is true that what the flood-tide had done, the ebb would undo.

The funnel, which was rather more than three fathoms in height, was buried more than eight feet in the wreck. The water-level would fall about twelve feet. Thus the funnel descending with the falling tide would have four feet of room to spare, and would clear itself easily.

But how much time would elapse before that release would be completed? Six hours.

In six hours it would be near midnight. What means would there be of attempting to start at such an hour? What channel could he find among all those breakers, so full of dangers even by day? How was he to risk his vessel in the depth of black night in that inextricable labyrinth, that ambuscade of shoals?

There was no help for it. He must wait for the morrow. These six hours lost, entailed a loss of twelve hours at least.

He could not even advance the labor by opening the mouth of the gorge. His breakwater was necessary against the next tide.

He was compelled to rest. Folding his arms was almost the only thing which he had not yet done since his arrival on the rocks.

This forced inaction irritated, almost vexed him with himself, as if it had been his fault. He thought "what would *Déruchette* say of me if she saw me thus doing nothing?"

And yet this interval for regaining his strength was not unnecessary.

The sloop was now at his command; he determined to pass the night in it.

He mounted once more to fetch his

sheepskin upon the Great Douvre; descended again, supped off a few limpets and *châtaignes de mer*, drank, being very thirsty, a few draughts of water from his can, which was nearly empty, enveloped himself in the skin, the wool of which felt comforting, lay down like a watch-dog beside the engine, drew his red cap over his eyes and slept.

His sleep was profound. It was such sleep as men enjoy who have completed a great labor.

X.

SEA-WARNINGS.

IN the middle of the night he awoke suddenly and with a jerk like the recoil of a spring.

He opened his eyes.

The Douvres, rising high over his head, were lighted up as by the white glow of burning embers. Over all the dark escarpment of the rock there was a light like the reflection of a fire.

Where could this fire come from?

It was from the water.

The aspect of the sea was extraordinary.

The water seemed afire. As far as the eye could reach, among the reefs and beyond them, the sea ran with flame. The flame was not red; it had nothing in common with the grand living fires of volcanic craters or of great furnaces. There was no sparkling, no glare, no purple edges, no noise. Long trails of a pale tint simulated upon the water the folds of a winding sheet. A trembling glow was spread over the waves. It was the spectre of a great fire rather than the fire itself. It was in some degree like the glow of unearthly flames lighting the inside of a sepulchre. A burning darkness.

The night itself, dim, vast, and wide-diffused, was the fuel of that cold flame. It was a strange illumination issuing out of blindness. The shadows even formed part of that phantom fire.

The sailors of the Channel are familiar with those indescribable phosphorescences, full of warning for the navigator. They



GILLIATT IN THE PHOSPHORESCENT SEA.

Hugo, vol. IV., p. 145.

are nowhere more surprising than in the "Great V," near Isigny.

By this light, surrounding objects lose their reality. A spectral glimmer renders them, as it were, transparent. Rocks become no more than outlines. Cables of anchors look like iron bars heated to a white heat. The nets of the fishermen beneath the water seem webs of fire. The half of the oar above the waves is dark as ebony, the rest in the sea like silver. The drops from the blades uplifted from the water fall in starry showers upon the sea. Every boat leaves a furrow behind it like a comet's tail. The sailors, wet and luminous, seem like men in flames. If you plunge a hand into the water, you withdraw it clothed in flame. The flame is dead, and is not felt. Your arm becomes a firebrand. You see the forms of things in the sea roll beneath the waves as in liquid fire. The foam twinkles. The fish are tongues of fire, or fragments of the forked lightning moving in the depths.

The reflection of this brightness had passed over the closed eyelids of Gilliatt in the sloop. It was this that had awakened him.

His awakening was opportune.

The ebb tide had run out, and the waters were beginning to rise again. The funnel, which had become disengaged during his sleep, was about to enter again into the yawning hollow above it.

It was rising slowly.

A rise of another foot would have entangled it in the wreck again. A rise of one foot is equivalent to half an hour's tide. If he intended, therefore, to take advantage of that temporary deliverance once more within his reach, he had just half an hour before him.

He leaped to his feet.

Urgent as the situation was, he stood for a few moments meditative, contemplating the phosphorescence of the waves.

Gilliatt knew the sea in all its phases. Notwithstanding all her tricks, and often as he had suffered from her terrors, he had long been her companion. That mysterious entity which we call the ocean had nothing in its secret thoughts which

he could not divine. Observation, meditation, and solitude, had given him a quick perception of coming changes of wind, or cloud, or wave.

Gilliatt hastened to the top ropes and payed out some cable; then being no longer held fast by the anchors, he seized the boat-hook of the sloop, and pushed her towards the entrance to the gorge some fathoms from the Durande, and quite near to the breakwater. Here, as the Guernsey sailors say, it had *du rang*. In less than ten minutes the sloop was withdrawn from beneath the carcass of the wreck. There was no further danger of the funnel being caught in a trap. The tide might rise now.

And yet Gilliatt's manner was not that of one about to take his departure.

He stood considering the light upon the sea once more; but his thoughts were not of starting. He was thinking of how to fix the sloop again, and how to fix it more firmly than ever, though near to the exit from the defile.

Up to this time he had only used the two anchors of the sloop, and had not yet employed the little anchor of the Durande, which he had found, as will be remembered, among the breakers. This anchor had been deposited by him in readiness for any emergency, in a corner of the sloop, with a quantity of hawsers, and blocks of top-ropes, and his cable, all furnished beforehand with large knots, which prevented its dragging. He now let go this third anchor, taking care to fasten the cable to a rope, one end of which was slung through the anchor ring, while the other was attached to the windlass of the sloop. In this manner he made a kind of triangular, triple anchorage, much stronger than the moorings with two anchors. All this indicated keen anxiety, and a redoubling of precautions. A sailor would have seen in this operation something similar to an anchorage in bad weather, when there is fear of a current which might carry the vessel under the wind.

The phosphorescence which he had been observing, and upon which his eye was now fixed once more, was threatening, but

serviceable at the same time. But for it he would have been held fast locked in sleep, and deceived by the night. The strange appearance upon the sea had awakened him, and made things about him visible.

The light which it shed among the rocks was, indeed, ominous; but disquieting as it appeared to be to Gilliatt, it had served to show him the dangers of his position, and had rendered possible his operations in extricating the sloop. Henceforth, whenever he should be able to set sail, the vessel, with its freight of machinery, would be free.

And yet the idea of departing was further than ever from his mind. The sloop being fixed in its new position, he went in quest of the strongest chain which he had in his store-cavern, and attaching it to the nails driven into the two Douvres, he fortified from within with this chain the rampart of planks and beams, already protected from without by the cross chain. Far from opening the entrance to the defile, he made the barrier more complete.

The phosphorescence lighted him still, but it was diminishing. The day, however, was beginning to break.

Suddenly he paused to listen.

XI.

MURMURS IN THE AIR.

A FEEBLE, indistinct sound seemed to reach his ear from somewhere in the far distance.

At certain hours the great deeps give forth a murmuring noise.

He listened a second time. The distant noise recommenced. Gilliatt shook his head like one who recognizes at last something familiar to him.

A few minutes later he was at the other extremity of the alley between the rocks, at the entrance facing the east, which had remained open until then, and by heavy blows of his hammer was driving large nails into the sides of the gullet near "The Man" rock, as he had done at the gullet of the Douvres.

The crevices of these rocks were pre-

pared and well furnished with timber, almost all of which was heart of oak. The rock on this side being much broken up, there were abundant cracks, and he was able to fix even more nails there than in the base of the two Douvres.

Suddenly, and as if some great breath had passed over it, the luminous appearance on the waters vanished. The twilight becoming paler every moment, assumed its functions.

The nails being driven, Gilliatt dragged beams and cords, and then chains to the spot; and without taking his eyes off his work, or permitting his mind to be diverted for a moment, he began to construct across the gorge of "The Man," with beams fixed horizontally, and made fast by cables, one of those open barriers which science has now adopted under the name of breakwaters.

Those who have witnessed, for example, at La Rocquaine in Guernsey, or at Bourgd Eau in France, the effect produced by a few posts fixed in the rock, will understand the power of these simple preparations. This sort of breakwater is a combination of what is called in France *épi* with what is known in England as "a dam." The breakwater is the *chevaux-de-frise* of fortifications against tempests. Man can only struggle against the sea by taking advantage of this principle of dividing its forces.

Meanwhile, the sun had risen, and was shining brightly. The sky was clear, the sea calm.

Gilliatt pressed on his work. He, too, was calm; but there was anxiety in his haste. He passed with long strides from rock to rock, and returned dragging wildly sometimes a rider, sometimes a binding strake. The utility of all this preparation of timbers now became manifest. It was evident that he was about to confront a danger which he had foreseen.

A strong iron bar served him as a lever for moving the beams.

The work was executed so fast that it was rather a rapid growth than a construction. He who has never seen a military pontooner at his work can scarcely form an idea of this rapidity.

The eastern gullett was still narrower

than the western. There were but five or six feet of interval between the rocks. The smallness of this opening was an assistance. The space to be fortified and closed up being very little, the apparatus would be stronger, and might be more simple. Horizontal beams, therefore, sufficed, the upright ones being useless.

The first cross pieces of the breakwater being fixed, Gilliatt mounted upon them and listened once more.

The murmurs had become significant.

He continued his construction. He supported it with the two catheads of the *Durande*, bound to the frame of beams by cords passed through the three pulley-sheaves. He made the whole fast by chains.

The construction was little more than a colossal hurdle, having beams for rods and chains in the place of wattles.

It seemed woven together, quite as much as built.

He multiplied the fastenings, and added nails where they were necessary.

Having obtained a great quantity of bar iron from the wreck, he had been able to make a large number of these heavy nails.

While still at work, he broke some biscuit with his teeth. He was thirsty, but he could not drink, having no more fresh water. He had emptied the can at his meal of the evening before.

He added afterwards four or five more pieces of timber; then climbed again upon the barrier and listened.

The noises from the horizon had ceased; all was still.

The sea was smooth and quiet; deserving all those complimentary phrases which worthy citizens bestow upon it when satisfied with a trip. "A mirror," "a pond," "like oil," and so forth. The deep blue of the sky responded to the deep green tint of the ocean. The sapphire and the emerald hues vied with each other. Each were perfect. Not a cloud on high, not a line of foam below. In the midst of all this splendor, the April sun rose magnificently. It was impossible to imagine a lovelier day.

On the verge of the horizon a flight of birds of passage formed a long dark line

against the sky. They were flying fast as if alarmed.

Gilliatt set to work again to raise the breakwater.

He raised it as high as he could; as high, indeed, as the curving of the rocks would permit.

Towards noon the sun appeared to him to give more than its usual warmth. Noon is the critical time of the day. Standing upon the powerful frame which he had built up, he paused again to survey the wide expanse.

The sea was more than tranquil. It was a dull dead calm. No sail was visible. The sky was everywhere clear; but from blue it had become white. The whiteness was singular. To the west, and upon the horizon, was a little spot of a sickly hue. The spot remained in the same place, but by degrees grew larger. Near the breakers the waves shuddered; but very gently.

Gilliatt had done well to build his breakwater.

A tempest was approaching.

The elements had determined to give battle.

BOOK III.

THE STRUGGLE.

I.

EXTREMES MEET.

NOTHING is more threatening than a late equinox.

The appearance of the sea presents a strange phenomenon, resulting from what may be called the arrival of the ocean winds.

In all seasons, but particularly at the epoch of the Syzygies, at the moment when least expected, the sea sometimes becomes singularly tranquil. That vast perpetual movement ceases; a sort of drowsiness and languor overspreads it; and it seems weary and about to rest. Every rag of bunting, from the tiny streamer of the fishing-boat to the great

flag of ships of war, droops against the mast. The admiral's flag, the Royal and Imperial ensigns sleep alike.

Suddenly all these streamers begin to flutter gently.

If there happen to be clouds, the moment has then come for marking the formation of the *cirri*; if the sun is setting, for observing the red tints of the horizon; or if it be night and there is a moon, for looking attentively for the halo.

It is then that the captain or commander of a squadron, if he happen to possess one of those storm indicators, the inventor of which is unknown, notes his instrument carefully, and takes his precautions against the south wind, if the clouds have an appearance like dissolved sugar; or against the north, if they exfoliate in crystallizations like brakes of brambles, or like fir woods. Then, too, the poor Irish or Breton fisherman, after having consulted some mysterious gnomon engraved by the Romans or by demons upon one of those straight enigmatical stones, which are called in Brittany *Menhir*, and in Ireland *Cruach*, hauls his boat up on the shore.

Meanwhile the serenity of sky and ocean continues. The day dawns radiant, and Aurora smiles. It was this which filled the old poets and seers with religious horror; for men dared to suspect the falsity of the sun. *Solem quis dicere falsum audeat?*

The sombre vision of nature's secret laws is interdicted to man by the fatal opacity of surrounding things. The most terrible and perfidious of her aspects is that which masks the convulsions of the deep.

Some hours, and even days sometimes, pass thus. Pilots raise their telescopes here and there. The faces of old seamen have always an expression of severity left upon them by the vexation of perpetually looking out for changes.

Suddenly a great confused murmur is heard. A sort of mysterious dialogue takes place in the air.

Nothing unusual is seen.

The wide expanse is tranquil.

Yet the noises increase. The dialogue becomes more audible.

There is something beyond the horizon. Something terrible. It is the wind.

The wind; or rather that populace of Titans which we call the gale. The unseen multitude.

India knew them as the Maroubis, Judea as the Keroubim, Greece as the Aquilones. They are the invisible winged creatures of the Infinite. Their blasts sweep over the earth.

II.

THE OCEAN WINDS.

THEY come from the immeasurable deep. Their wide wings need the breadth of the ocean gulf; the spaciousness of desert solitudes. The Atlantic, the Pacific—those vast blue plains—are their delight. They hasten thither in flocks. Commander Page witnessed, far out at sea, seven waterspouts at once. They wander there, wild and terrible. The ever-ending yet eternal flux and reflux is their work. The extent of their power, the limits of their will, none know. They are the Sphinxes of the abyss: Gama was their *Œdipus*. In that dark, ever-moving expanse, they appear with faces of cloud. He who perceives their pale lineaments in that wide dispersion, the horizon of the sea, feels himself in presence of an unsubduable power. It might be imagined that the proximity of human intelligence disquieted them, and that they revolted against it. The mind of man is invincible, but the elements baffle him. He can do nothing against the power which is everywhere, and which none can bind. The gentle breath becomes a gale, smites with the force of a war-club, and then becomes gentle again. The winds attack with a terrible crash, and defend themselves by fading into nothingness. He who would encounter them must use artifice. Their varying tactics, their swift-redoubled blows, confuse. They fly as often as they attack. They are tenacious and impalpable. Who can circumvent them? The prow of the *Argo*, cut from an oak of Dodona's grove, that mys-

terious pilot of the bark, spoke to them, and they insulted that pilot-goddess. Columbus, beholding their approach at *La Pinta*, mounted upon the poop, and addressed them with the first verses of St. John's Gospel. Surcouf defied them: "Here come the gang," he used to say. Napier greeted them with cannon-balls. They assume the dictatorship of chaos.

Chaos is theirs, in which to wreak their mysterious vengeance: the den of the winds is more monstrous than that of lions. How many corpses lie in its deep recesses, where the howling gusts sweep without pity over that obscure and ghastly mass! The winds are heard wheresoever they go, but they give ear to none. Their acts resemble crimes. None know on whom they cast their hoary surf; with what ferocity they hover over shipwrecks, looking at times as if they flung their impious foam-flakes in the face of heaven. They are the tyrants of unknown regions. "*Luoghi spaventosi*," murmured the Venetian mariners.

The trembling fields of space are subjected to their fierce assaults. Things unspeakable come to pass in those deserted regions. Some horseman rides in the gloom; the air is full of a forest sound; nothing is visible; but the tramp of cavalcades is heard. The noonday is overcast with sudden night; a tornado passes. Or it is midnight, which suddenly becomes bright as day; the polar lights are in the heavens. Whirlwinds pass in opposite ways, and in a sort of hideous dance, a stamping of the storms upon the waters. A cloud overburdened opens and falls to earth. Other clouds, filled with red light, flash and roar; then frown again ominously. Emptied of their lightnings, they are but as spent brands. Pent-up rains dissolve in mists. Yonder sea appears a fiery furnace in which the rains are falling: flames seem to issue from the waves. The white gleam of the ocean under the shower is reflected to marvellous distances. The different masses transform themselves into uncouth shapes. Monstrous whirlpools make strange hollows in the sky. The vapors revolve, the waves spin, the giddy Naiads roll; sea

and sky are livid; noises as of cries of despair are in the air.

Great sheaves of shadow and darkness are gathered up, trembling in the far depths of the sky. Now and then there is a convulsion. The rumor becomes tumult as the wave becomes surge. The horizon, a confused mass of strata, oscillating ceaselessly, murmurs in a continual under-tone. Strange and sudden outbursts break through the monotony. Cold airs rush forth, succeeded by warm blasts. The trepidation of the sea betokens anxious expectation, agony, terror profound. Suddenly the hurricane comes down, like a wild beast, to drink of the ocean: a monstrous draught! The sea rises to the invisible mouth; a mound of water is formed; the swell increases, and the waterspout appears: the Prester of the ancients, stalactite above, stalagmite below, a whirling double-inverted cone, a point in equilibrium upon another, the embrace of two mountains—a mountain of foam ascending, a mountain of vapor descending—terrible coition of the cloud and the wave. Like the column in Holy Writ, the waterspout is dark by day and luminous by night. In its presence the thunder itself is silent and seems cowed.

The vast commotion of those solitudes has its gamut, a terrible crescendo. There are the gust, the squall, the storm, the gale, the tempest, the whirlwind, the waterspout—the seven chords of the lyre of the winds, the seven notes of the firmament. The heavens are a clear space, the sea a vast round; but a breath passes, they have vanished, and all is fury and wild confusion.

Such are these inhospitable realms.

The winds rush, fly, swoop down, dwindle away, commence again; hover above, whistle, roar, and smile; they are frenzied, wanton, unbridled, or sinking at ease upon the raging waves. Their howlings have a harmony of their own. They make all the heavens sonorous. They blow in the cloud as in a trumpet; they sing through the infinite space with the mingled tones of clarions, horns, bugles, and trumpets—a sort of Promethean fanfare.

Such was the music of ancient Pan. Their harmonies are terrible. They have a colossal joy in the darkness. They drive and disperse great ships. Night and day, in all seasons, from the tropics to the pole, there is no truce; sounding their fatal trumpet through the tangled thickets of the clouds and waves, they pursue the grim chase of vessels in distress. They have their packs of bloodhounds, and take their pleasure, setting them to bark among the rocks and billows. They huddle the clouds together, and drive them diverse. They mould and knead the supple waters as with a million hands.

The water is supple because it is incompressible. It slips away without effort. Borne down on one side, it escapes on the other. It is thus that waters become waves, and that the billows are a token of their liberty.

III.

THE NOISES EXPLAINED.

THE grand descent of winds upon the world takes place at the equinoxes. At this period the balance of tropic and pole librates, and the vast atmospheric tides pour their flood upon one hemisphere and their ebb upon another. The signs of *Libra* and *Aquarius* have reference to these phenomena.

It is the time of tempests.

The sea awaits their coming, keeping silence.

Sometimes the sky looks sickly. Its face is wan. A thick dark veil obscures it. The mariners observe with uneasiness the angry aspect of the clouds.

But it is its air of calm contentment which they dread the most. A smiling sky in the equinoxes is the tempest in gay disguise. It was under skies like these that "The Tower of Weeping Women," in Amsterdam, was filled with wives and mothers scanning the far horizon.

When the vernal or autumnal storms delay to break, they are gathering strength; hoarding up their fury for more sure destruction. Beware of the gale that has been long delayed. It was Angot who

said that "the sea pays well old debts." When the delay is unusually long, the sea betokens her impatience only by a deeper calm, but the magnetic intensity manifests itself by what might be called a fiery humor in the sea. Fire issues from the waves; electric air, phosphoric water. The sailors feel a strange lassitude. This time is particularly perilous for iron vessels; their hulls are then liable to produce variations of the compass, leading them to destruction. The transatlantic steam-vessel "*Iowa*" perished from this cause.

To those who are familiar with the sea, its aspect at these moments is singular. It may be imagined to be both desiring and fearing the approach of the cyclone. Certain unions, though strongly urged by nature, are attended by this strange conjunction of terror and desire. The lioness in her tenderest moods flies from the lion. Thus the sea, in the fire of her passion, trembles at the near approach of her union with the tempest. The nuptials are prepared. Like the marriages of the ancient emperors, they are celebrated with immolations. The fête is heralded with disasters.

Meanwhile, from yonder deeps, from the great open sea, from the unapproachable latitudes, from the lurid horizon of the watery waste, from the utmost bounds of the free ocean, the winds pour down.

Listen; for this is the famous equinox.

The storm prepares mischief. In the old mythology these entities were recognized, indistinctly moving, in the grand scene of nature. *Eolus* plotted with *Boreas*. The alliance of element with element is necessary; they divide their task. One has to give impetus to the wave, the cloud, the stream: night is an auxiliary, and must be employed. There are compasses to be falsified, beacons to be extinguished, lanterns of lighthouses to be masked, stars to be hidden. The sea must lend her aid. Every storm is preceded by a murmur. Behind the horizon line there is a premonitory whispering among the hurricanes.

This is the noise which is heard afar off in the darkness amidst the terrible silence of the sea.

It was this significant whispering which Gilliatt had noted. The phosphorescence on the water had been the first warning, this murmur the second.

If the demon Legion exists, he is assuredly no other than the wind.

The wind is complex, but the air is one.

Hence it follows that all storms are mixed—a principle which results from the unity of the air.

The entire abyss of heaven takes part in a tempest: the entire ocean also. The totality of its forces is marshalled for the strife. A wave is the ocean gulf; a gust is a gulf of the atmosphere. A contest with a storm is a contest with all the powers of sea and sky.

It was Messier, that great authority among naval men, the pensive astronomer of the little lodge at Cluny, who said, "The wind comes from everywhere and is everywhere." He had no faith in the idea of winds imprisoned even in inland seas. With him there were no Mediterranean winds; he declared that he recognised them as they wandered about the earth. He affirmed that on a certain day, at a certain hour, the Föhn of the Lake of Constance, the ancient Favonius of Lucretius, had traversed the horizon of Paris; on another day, the Bora of the Adriatic; on another day, the whirling Notus, which is supposed to be confined in the round of the Cyclades. He indicated their currents. He did not believe it impossible that the "Autan," which circulates between Corsica and the Balearic Isles, could escape from its bounds. He did not admit the theory of winds imprisoned like bears in their dens. It was he, too, who said that "every rain comes from the tropics, and every flash of lightning from the pole." The wind, in fact, becomes saturated with electricity at the intersection of the colures which marks the extremity of the axis, and with water at the equator; bringing moisture from the equatorial line and the electric fluid from the poles.

The wind is ubiquitous.

It is certainly not meant by this that the winds never move in zones. Nothing is better established than the existence of

those continuous air currents; and aerial navigation by means of the wind boats, to which the passion for Greek terminology has given the name of "aeroscaphes," may one day succeed in utilizing the chief of these streams of wind. The regular course of air streams is an incontestable fact. There are both rivers of wind and rivulets of wind, although their branches are exactly the reverse of water currents; for in the air it is the rivulets which flow out of the rivers, and the smaller rivers which flow out of the great streams instead of falling into them. Hence instead of concentration we have dispersion.

The united action of the winds and the unity of the atmosphere result from this dispersion. The displacement of one molecule produces the displacement of another. The vast body of air becomes subject to one agitation. To these profound causes of coalition we must add the irregular surface of the earth, whose mountains furrow the atmosphere, contorting and diverting the winds from their course, and determining the directions of counter currents in infinite radiations.

The phenomenon of the wind is the oscillation of two oceans one against the other; the ocean of air, superimposed upon the ocean of water, rests upon these currents, and is convulsed with this vast agitation.

The indivisible cannot produce separate action. No partition divides wave from wave. The islands of the Channel feel the influence of the Cape of Good Hope. Navigation everywhere contends with the same monster; the sea is one hydra. The waves cover it as with a coat of scales. The ocean is Ceto.

Upon that unity reposes an infinite variety.

IV.

TURBA TURMA.

ACCORDING to the compass there are thirty-two winds, that is to say, thirty-two points. But these directions may be subdivided indefinitely. Classed by its directions, the wind is incalculable; classed by its kinds, it is infinite. Homer himself would have shrunk from the task of enumerating them.

The polar current encounters the tropical current. Heat and cold are thus combined; the equilibrium is disturbed by a shock, the wave of wind issues forth and is distended, scattered and broken up in every direction in fierce streams. The dispersion of the gusts shakes the streaming locks of the wind upon the four corners of the horizon.

All the winds which blow are there. The wind of the Gulf Stream, which disgorges the great fogs of Newfoundland; the wind of Peru, in the region of silent heavens, where no man ever heard the thunder roar; the wind of Nova Scotia, where flies the great auk (*Alca impennis*) with his furrowed beak; the iron whirlwinds of the Chinese seas; the wind of Mozambique, which destroys the canoes and junks; the electric wind, which the people of Japan denounce by the beating of a gong; the African wind, which blows between Table Mountain and the Devil's Peak, where it gains its liberty; the currents of the equator, which pass over the trade winds, describing a parabola, the summit of which is always to the west; the Plutonian wind, which issues from craters, the terrible breath of flames; the singular wind peculiar to the volcano Awa, which occasions a perpetual olive tint in the north; the Java monsoon, against which the people construct those casemates known as hurricane houses; the branching north winds called by the English "Bush winds;" the curved squalls of the Straits of Malacca, observed by Horsburgh; the powerful south-west wind, called Pampero in Chili, and Rebojo at Buenos Ayres, which carries the great condor out to sea, and saves him from the pit where the Indian, concealed under a bullock-hide newly stripped, watches for him, lying on his back and bending his great bow with his feet; the chemical wind, which, according to Lemery, produces thunderbolts from the clouds; the Harmattan of the Caffres; the Polar snow-driver, which harnesses itself to the everlasting icebergs; the wind of the Gulf of Bengal, which sweeps over a continent to pillage the triangular town of wooden booths at Nijni-Novogorod, in which is held the

great fair of Asia; the wind of the Cordilleras, agitator of great waves and forests; the wind of the Australian Archipelago, where the bee-hunters take the wild hives hidden under the forks of the branches of the giant encalyptus; the Sirocco, the Mistral, the Hurricane, the dry winds, the inundating and diluvian winds, the torrid winds, which scatter dust from the plains of Brazil upon the streets of Genoa, which both obey and revolt against the diurnal rotation, and of which Herrara said, "*Malo viento torna contra el sol*;" those winds which hunt in couples, conspiring mischief, the one undoing the work of the other; and those old winds which assailed Columbus on the coast of Veragua, and which during forty days, from the 21st of October to the 28th of November, 1520, delayed and nearly frustrated Magellan's approach to the Pacific; and those which dismasted the Armada and confounded Philip II. Others, too, there are, of the names of which there is no end. The winds, for instance, which carry showers of frogs and locusts, and drive before them clouds of living things across the ocean; those which blow in what are called "Wind-leaps," and whose function is to destroy ships at sea; those which at a single blast throw the cargo out of trim, and compel the vessel to continue her course half broadside over; the winds which construct the circum-cumuli; the winds which mass together the circum-strati; the dark heavy winds swelled with rains; the winds of the hailstorms; the fever winds, whose approach sets the salt springs and sulphur springs of Calabria boiling; those which give a glittering appearance to the fur of African panthers, prowling among the bushes of Cape Ferro; those which come shaking from the cloud, like the tongue of a trigonocephal, the terrible forked lightning; and those which bring whirlwinds of black snow. Such is the legion of winds.

The Douvres rock heard their distant tramp at the moment when Gilliatt was constructing his breakwater.

As we have said, the wind means the combination of all the winds of the earth.

V.

GILLIATT'S ALTERNATIVES.

THE mysterious forces had chosen their time well.

Chance, if chance exists, is sometimes far-seeing.

While the sloop had been anchored in the little creek of "The Man" rock, and as long as the machinery had been prisoned in the wreck, Gilliatt's position had been impregnable. The sloop was in safety; the machinery sheltered. The Douvres, which held the mill of the Durande fast, condemned it to slow destruction, but protected it against unexpected accidents. In any event, one resource had remained to him. If the engine had been destroyed, Gilliatt would have been uninjured. He had still the sloop by which to escape.

But to wait till the sloop was removed from the anchorage where she was inaccessible; to allow it to be fixed in the defile of the Douvres; to watch until the sloop, too, was, as it were, entangled in the rocks; to permit him to complete the salvage, the moving, and the final embarkation of the machinery; to do no damage to that wonderful construction by which one man was enabled to put the whole aboard his bark; to acquiesce, in fact, in the success of his exploits so far; this was but the trap which the elements had laid for him. Now for the first time he began to perceive in all its sinister characteristics the trick which the sea had been meditating so long.

The machinery, the sloop, and their master were all now within the gorge of the rocks. They formed but a single point. One blow, and the sloop might be dashed to pieces on the rock, the machinery destroyed, and Gilliatt drowned.

The situation could not have been more critical.

The sphinx, which men have imagined concealing herself in the cloud, seemed to mock him with a dilemma.

"Go or stay."

To go would have been madness; to remain was terrible.

VI.

THE COMBAT.

GILLIATT ascended to the summit of the Great Douvre.

From hence he could see around the horizon.

The western side was appalling. A wall of cloud spread across it, barring the wide expanse from side to side, and ascending slowly from the horizon towards the zenith. This wall, straight lined, vertical, without a crevice in its height, without a rent in its structure, seemed built by the square and measured by the plumb-line. It was cloud in the likeness of granite. Its escarpment, completely perpendicular at the southern extremity, curved a little towards the north, like a bent sheet of iron, presenting the steep slippery face of an inclined plane. The dark wall enlarged and grew; but its entablature never ceased for a moment to be parallel with the horizon line, which was almost indistinguishable in the gathering darkness. Silently, and altogether, the airy battlements ascended. No undulation, no wrinkle, no projection changed its shape or moved its place. The aspect of this immobility in movement was impressive. The sun, pale in the midst of a strange sickly transparence, lighted up this outline of the Apocalypse. Already the cloudy bank had blotted out one half the space of the sky: shelving like the fearful talus of the abyss. It was the uprising of a dark mountain between earth and heaven.

It was night falling suddenly upon midday.

There was a heat in the air as from an oven door, coming from that mysterious mass on mass. The sky, which from blue had become white, was now turning from white to a slatey gray. The sea beneath was leaden-hued and dull. There was no breath, no wave, no noise. Far as eye could reach, the desert ocean. No sail was visible on any side. The birds had disappeared. Some monstrous treason seemed abroad.

The wall of cloud grew visibly larger.

This moving mountain of vapors, which

was approaching the Douvres, was one of those clouds which might be called the clouds of battle. Sinister appearances; some strange, furtive glance seemed cast upon the beholder through that obscure mass up-piled.

The approach was terrible.

Gilliatt observed it closely, and muttered to himself, "I am thirsty enough, but you will give me plenty to drink."

He stood there motionless a few moments, his eye fixed upon the cloud bank, as if mentally taking a sounding of the tempest.

His *galérienne* was in the pocket of his jacket; he took it out and placed it on his head. Then he fetched from the cave, which had so long served him for a sleeping-place, a few things which he had kept there in reserve; he put on his overalls, and attired himself in his waterproof overcoat, like a knight who puts on his armor at the moment of battle. He had no shoes; but his naked feet had become hardened to the rocks.

This preparation for the storm being completed, he looked down upon his break-water, grasped the knotted cord hurriedly, descended from the plateau of the Douvre, stepped on to the rocks below, and hastened to his store cavern. A few moments later he was at work. The vast silent cloud might have heard the strokes of his hammer. With the nails, ropes, and beams which still remained, he constructed for the eastern gullet a second frame, which he succeeded in fixing at ten or twelve feet from the other.

The silence was still profound. The blades of grass between the cracks of the rocks were not stirred.

The sun disappeared suddenly. Gilliatt looked up.

The rising cloud had just reached it. It was like the blotting out of day, succeeded by a mingled pale reflection.

The immense wall of cloud had changed its appearance. It no longer retained its unity. It had curved on reaching the zenith, whence it spread horizontally over the rest of the heavens. It had now its various stages. The tempest formation was visible, like the strata in the side of

a trench. It was possible to distinguish the layers of the rain from the beds of hail. There was no lightning, but a horrible, diffused glare; for the idea of horror may be attached to light. The vague breathing of the storm was audible; the silence was broken by an obscure palpitation. Gilliatt, silent also, watched the giant blocks of vapor grouping themselves overhead forming the shapeless mass of clouds. Upon the horizon brooded and lengthened out a band of mist of ashen hue; in the zenith, another band of lead color. Pale, ragged fragments of cloud hung from the great mass above upon the mist below. The pile of cloud which formed the back-ground was wan, dull, gloomy. A thin, whitish, transverse cloud, coming no one could tell whither, cut the high dark wall obliquely from north to south. One of the extremities of this cloud trailed along the surface of the sea. At the point where it touched the waters, a dense red vapor was visible in the midst of the darkness. Below it, smaller clouds, quite black and very low, were flying as if bewildered or moved by opposite currents of air. The immense cloud beyond increased from all points at once, darkened the eclipse, and continued to spread its sombre pall. In the east, behind Gilliatt, there was only one clear porch in the heavens, which was rapidly being closed. Without any feeling of wind abroad, a strange flight of gray downy particles seemed to pass; they were fine and scattered as if some gigantic bird had been plucked of its plumage behind the bank of cloud. A dark compact roof had gradually formed itself, which on the verge of the horizon touched the sea, and mingled in darkness with it. The beholder had a vague sense of something advancing steadily towards him. It was vast, heavy, ominous. Suddenly an immense peal of thunder burst upon the air.

Gilliatt himself felt the shock. The rude reality in the midst of that visionary region has something in it terrific. The listener might fancy that he hears something falling in the chamber of giants. No electric flash accompanied the report.

It was a blind peal. The silence was profound again. There was an interval, as when combatants take up their position. Then appeared slowly, one after the other, great shapeless flashes; these flashes were silent. The wall of cloud was now a vast cavern, with roofs and arches. Outlines of forms were traceable among them; monstrous heads were vaguely shadowed forth; rocks seemed to stretch out; elephants bearing turrets, seen for a moment, vanished. A column of vapor, straight, round, and dark, and surmounted by a white mist, simulated the form of a colossal steam vessel engulfed, hissing, and smoking beneath the waves. Sheets of cloud undulated like folds of giant flags. In the centre, under a thick purple pall, a nucleus of dense fog sunk motionless, inert, impenetrable by the electric fires; a sort of hideous fœtus in the bosom of the tempest.

Suddenly Gilliatt felt a breath moving his hair. Two or three large spots of rain fell heavily around him on the rock. Then there was a second thunder-clap. The wind was rising.

The terror of darkness was at its highest point. The first peal of thunder had shaken the sea; the second rent the wall of cloud from top to base; a breach was visible; the pent-up deluge rushed towards it; the rent became like a gulf filled with rain. The outpouring of the tempest had begun.

The moment was terrible.

Rain, wind, lightnings, thunder, waves swirling upwards to the clouds, foam, hoarse noises, whistlings, mingled together like monsters suddenly unloosened.

For a solitary man, imprisoned with an overloaded vessel, between two dangerous rocks in mid-ocean, no crisis could have been more menacing. The danger of the tide, over which he had triumphed, was nothing compared with the danger of the tempest.

Surrounded on all sides by dangers, Gilliatt, at the last moment, and before the crowning peril, had developed an ingenious strategy. He had secured his basis of operations in the enemies' territory; had pressed the rock into his

service. The Douvres, originally his enemy, had become his second in that immense duel. Out of that sepulchre he had constructed a fortress. He was built up among those formidable sea ruins. He was blockaded, but well defended. He had, so to speak, set his back against the wall, and stood face to face with the hurricane. He had barricaded the narrow strait, that highway of the waves. This, indeed, was the only possible course. It seemed as if the ocean, like other despots, might be brought to reason by the aid of barricades. The sloop might be considered secure on three sides. Closely wedged between the two interior walls of the rock, made fast by three anchorings, she was sheltered from the north by the Little Douvre, on the south by the Great one; terrible escarpments, more accustomed to wreck vessels than to save them. On the western side she was protected by the frame of timbers made fast and nailed to the rocks—a tried barrier which had withstood the rude flood-tide of the sea; a veritable citadel-gate, having for its sides the columns of the rock—the two Douvres themselves. Nothing was to be feared from that side. It was on the eastern side only that there was danger.

On that side there was no protection but the breakwater. A breakwater is an apparatus for dividing and distributing. It requires at least two frames. Gilliatt had only had time to construct one. He was compelled to build the second in the very presence of the tempest.

Fortunately the wind came from the north-west. The wind is not always adroit in its attacks. The north-west wind, which is the ancient "*galerno*," had little effect upon the Douvres. It assailed the rocks in flank, and drove the waves neither against the one nor the other of the two gulleys; so that instead of rushing into a defile, they dashed themselves against a wall.

But the currents of the wind are curved, and it was probable that there would be some sudden change. If it should veer to the east before the second frame could be constructed the peril would be great. The irruption of the sea into the gorge would

be complete, and all would probably be lost.

The wildness of the storm went on increasing. The essence of a tempest is the rapid succession of its blows. That is its strength; but it is also its weakness. Its fury gives the opportunity to human intelligence, and man spies its weak points for his defence; but under what overwhelming assaults! No respite, no interruption, no truce, no pause for taking breath. There seems an unspeakable cowardice in that prodigality of inexhaustible resources.

All the tumult of the wide expanse rushed towards the Douvres. Voices were heard in the darkness. What could they be? The ancient terror of the sea was there. At times they seemed to speak as if some one was uttering words of command. There were clamors, strange trepidations, and then that majestic roar which the mariners call the "Ocean cry." The indefinite and flying eddies of the wind whistled, while curling the waves and flinging them like giant quoits, cast by invisible athletes, against the breakers. The enormous surf streamed over all the rocks; torrents above; foam below. Then the roaring was redoubled. No uproar of men or beasts could yield an idea of that din which mingled with the incessant breaking of the sea. The clouds cannonaded, the hailstones poured their volleys, the surf mounted to the assault. As far as eye could reach, the sea was white; ten leagues of yeasty water filled the horizon. Doors of fire were opened, clouds seemed burnt by clouds, and showed like smoke above a nebulous red mass, resembling burning embers. Floating conflagrations rushed together and amalgamated, each changing the shape of the other. From the midst of the dark roof a terrible arsenal appeared to be emptied out, hurling downward from the gulf, pell-mell, waterspouts, hail torrents, purple fire, phosphoric gleams, darkness, and lightnings.

Meanwhile Gilliatt seemed to pay no attention to the storm. His head was bent over his work. The second framework began to approach completion. To every clap of thunder he replied with a blow of his hammer, making a cadence which was

audible even amidst that tumult. He was bareheaded, for a gust had carried away his *galérienne*.

He suffered from a burning thirst. Little pools of rain had formed in the rocks around him. From time to time he took some water in the hollow of his hand and drank. Then, without even looking upward to observe the storm, he applied himself anew to his task.

All might depend upon a moment. He knew the fate that awaited him if his breakwater should not be completed in time. Of what avail could it be to lose a moment in looking for the approach of death?

The turmoil around him was like that of a vast bubbling caldron. Crash and uproar were everywhere. Sometimes the lightning seemed to descend a sort of ladder. The electric flame returned incessantly to the same points of the rock, where there were probably metallic veins. Hailstones fell of enormous size. Gilliatt was compelled to shake the folds of his overcoat, even the pockets of which became filled with hail.

The storm had now rotated to the west, and was expending its fury upon the barricades of the two Douvres. But Gilliatt had faith in his breakwaters, and with good reason. These barricades, made of a great portion of the fore-part of the *Durande*, took the shock of the waves easily. Elasticity is a resistance. The experiments of Stephenson establish the fact that against the waves, which are themselves elastic, a raft of timber, joined and chained together in a certain fashion, will form a more powerful obstacle than a breakwater of masonry. The barriers of the Douvres fulfilled these conditions. They were, moreover, so ingeniously made fast, that the waves striking them beneath were like hammers beating in nails, pressing and consolidating the work upon the rocks. To demolish them it would have been necessary to overthrow the Douvres themselves. The surf, in fact, was only able to cast over upon the sloop some flakes of foam. On that side, thanks to the barrier, the tempest ended only in harmless insult. Gilliatt turned his back upon the scene.

He heard composedly its useless rage upon the rocks behind him.

The foam-flakes coming from all sides were like flights of down. The vast irritated ocean deluged the rocks, dashed over them and raged within, penetrated into the network of their interior fissures, and issued again from the granitic masses by the narrow chinks, forming a kind of inexhaustible fountains playing peacefully in the midst of that deluge. Here and there a silvery network fell gracefully from these spouts in the sea.

The second frame of the eastern barrier was nearly completed. A few more knots of rope and ends of chains and this new rampart would be ready to play its part in barring out the storm.

Suddenly there was a great brightness; the rain ceased; the clouds rolled asunder; the wind had just shifted; a sort of high, dark window opened in the zenith, and the lightnings were extinguished. The end seemed to have come. It was but the commencement.

The change of wind was from the north-west to the north-east.

The storm was preparing to burst forth again with a new legion of hurricanes. The north was about to mount to the assault. Sailors call this dreaded moment of transition the "Return storm." The southern wind brings most rain, the north wind most lightning.

The attack, coming now from the east, was directed against the weak point of the position.

This time Gilliatt interrupted his work and looked around him.

He stood erect upon a curved projection of the rock behind the second barrier, which was nearly finished. If the first frame had been carried away, it would have broken down the second, which was not yet consolidated, and must have crushed him. Gilliatt, in the place that he had chosen, must in that case have been destroyed before seeing the sloop, the machinery, and all his work shattered and swallowed up in the gulf. Such was the possibility which awaited him. He accepted it, and contemplated it sternly.

In that wreck of all his hope, to die at

once would have been his desire; to die first, as he would have regarded it—for the machinery produced in his mind the effect of a living being. He moved aside his hair, which was beaten over his eyes by the wind, grasped his trusty mallet, drew himself up in a menacing attitude, and awaited the event.

He was not kept long in suspense.

A flash of lightning gave the signal; the livid opening in the zenith closed; a driving torrent of rain fell; then all became dark, save where the lightnings broke forth once more. The attack had recommenced in earnest.

A heavy swell, visible from time to time in the blaze of the lightning, was rolling in the east beyond "The Man" rock. It resembled a huge wall of glass. It was green and without foam, and it stretched across the wide expanse. It was advancing towards the breakwater, increasing as it approached. It was a singular kind of gigantic cylinder, rolling upon the ocean. The thunder kept up a hollow rumbling.

The great wave struck "The Man" rock, broke in twain, and passed beyond. The broken wave, rejoined, formed a mountain of water, and instead of advancing in parallel line as before, came down perpendicularly upon the breakwater.

The shock was terrific: the whole wave became a roaring surf.

It is impossible for those who have not witnessed them to imagine those snowy avalanches which the sea thus precipitates, and under which it engulfs for the moment rocks of more than a hundred feet in height, such, for example, as the Great Anderlo at Guernsey, and the Pinnacle at Jersey. At Saint Mary of Madagascar it passes completely over the promontory of Tintingue.

For some moments the sea drowned everything. Nothing was visible except the furious waters, an enormous breadth of foam, the whiteness of a winding-sheet blowing in the draught of a sepulchre; nothing was heard but the roaring storm working devastation around.

When the foam subsided, Gilliatt was still standing at his post.

The barrier had stood firm. Not a chain was broken, not a nail displaced. It had exhibited under the trial the two chief qualities of a breakwater; it had proved flexible as a hurdle and firm as a wall. The surf falling upon it had dissolved into a shower of drops.

A river of foam rushing along the zigzags of the defile subsided as it approached the sloop.

The man who had put this curb upon the fury of the ocean took no rest.

The storm fortunately turned aside its fury for a moment. The fierce attack of the waves was renewed upon the wall of the rock. There was a respite, and Gilliatt took advantage of it to complete the interior barrier.

The daylight faded upon his labors. The hurricane continued its violence upon the flank of the rocks with a mournful solemnity. The stores of fire and water in the sky poured out incessantly without exhausting themselves. The undulations of the wind above and below were like the movements of a dragon.

Nightfall brought scarcely any deeper night. The change was hardly felt, for the darkness was never complete. Tempests, alternately darkening and illumining by their lightnings, are merely intervals of the visible and invisible. All is pale glare, and then all is darkness. Spectral shapes issue forth suddenly, and return as suddenly into the deep shade.

A phosphoric zone, tinged with the hue of the aurora borealis, appeared like ghastly flames behind the dense clouds, giving to all things a wan aspect, and making the rain-drifts luminous.

This uncertain light aided Gilliatt, and directed him in his operations. By its help he was enabled to raise the forward barrier. The breakwater was now almost complete. As he was engaged in making fast a powerful cable to the last beam, the gale blew directly in his face. This compelled him to raise his head. The wind had shifted abruptly to the north-east. The assault upon the eastern gullet recommenced. Gilliatt cast his eyes around the horizon. Another great wall of water was approaching.

The wave broke with a great shock; a second followed; then another and another still; then five or six almost together; then a last shock of tremendous force.

This last wave, which was an accumulation of forces, had a singular resemblance to a living thing. It would not have been difficult to imagine in the midst of that swelling mass the shapes of fins and gill-coverings. It fell heavily and broke upon the barriers. Its almost animal form was torn to pieces in the shape of spouts and gushes, resembling the crushing to death of some sea hydra upon that block of rocks and timbers. The swell rushed through, subsiding but devastating as it went. The huge wave seemed to bite and cling to its victim as it died. The rock shook to its base. A savage howling mingled with the roar; the foam flew far like the spouting of a leviathan.

The subsidence exhibited the extent of the ravages of the surf. This last escalade had not been ineffectual. The breakwater had suffered this time. A long and heavy beam, torn from the first barrier, had been carried over the second, and hurled violently upon the projecting rock on which Gilliatt had stood but a moment before. By good fortune he had not returned there. Had he done so, his death had been inevitable.

There was a remarkable circumstance in the fall of this beam, which by preventing the framework rebounding, saved Gilliatt from greater dangers. It even proved useful to him, as will be seen, in another way.

Between the projecting rock and the interior wall of the defile there was a large interval, something like the notch of an axe, or the split of a wedge. One of the extremities of the timber hurled into the air by the waves had stuck fast into this notch in falling. The gap had become enlarged.

Gilliatt was struck with an idea. It was that of bearing heavily on the other extremity.

The beam caught by one end in the nook, which it had widened, projected from it straight as an outstretched arm. This species of arm projected

parallel with the anterior wall of the defile, and the disengaged end stretched from its resting place about eighteen or twenty inches. A good distance for the object to be attained.

Gilliatt raised himself by means of his hands, feet and knees to the escarpment, and then turned his back, pressing both his shoulders against the enormous lever. The beam was long, which increased its raising power. The rock was already loosened; but he was compelled to renew his efforts again and again. The sweat-drops rolled from his forehead as rapidly as the spray. The fourth attempt exhausted all his powers. There was a cracking noise; the gap spreading in the shape of a fissure, opened its vast jaws, and the heavy mass fell into the narrow space of the defile with a noise like the echo of the thunder.

The mass fell straight, and without breaking; resting in its bed like a Druid cromlech precipitated in one piece.

The beam which had served as a lever descended with the rock, and Gilliatt, stumbling forward as it gave way, narrowly escaped falling.

The bed of the pass at this part was full of huge round stones, and there was little water. The monolith lying in the boiling foam, the flakes of which fell on Gilliatt where he stood, stretched from side to side of the great parallel rocks of the defile, and formed a transversal wall, a sort of cross-stroke between the two escarpments. Its two ends touched the rocks. It had been a little too long to lie flat, but its summit of soft rock was struck off with the fall. The result of this fall was a singular sort of *cul-de-sac*, which may still be seen. The water behind this stony barrier is almost always tranquil.

This was a rampart more invincible still than the forward timbers of the *Du-rande* fixed between the two *Douvres*.

The barrier came opportunely.

The assaults of the sea had continued. The obstinacy of the waves is always increased by an obstacle. The first frame began to show signs of breaking up. One breach, however small, in a breakwater, is always serious. It inevitably enlarges,

and there is no means of supplying its place, for the sea would sweep away the workmen.

A flash which lighted up the rocks revealed to Gilliatt the nature of the mischief; the beams broken down, the ends of rope and fragments of chain swinging in the winds, and a rent in the centre of the apparatus. The second frame was intact.

Though the block of stone so powerfully overturned by Gilliatt in the defile behind the breakwater was the strongest possible barrier, it had a defect. It was too low. The surge could not destroy, but could sweep over it.

It was useless to think of building it higher. Nothing but masses of rock could avail upon a barrier of stone; but how could such masses be detached? or, if detached, how could they be moved, or raised, or piled, or fixed? Timbers may be added, but rocks cannot.

Gilliatt was not *Enceladus*.

The very little height of this rocky isthmus rendered him anxious.

The effects of this fault were not long in showing themselves. The assaults upon the breakwater were incessant; the heavy seas seemed not merely to rage, but to attack with determination to destroy it. A sort of trampling noise was heard upon the jolted framework.

Suddenly the end of a binding strake, detached from the dislocated frame, was swept away over the second barrier and across the transversal rock, falling in the defile, where the water seized and carried it into the sinuosities of the pass. Gilliatt lost sight of it. It seemed probable that it would do some injury to the sloop. Fortunately, the water in the interior of the rocks, shut in on all sides, felt little of the commotion without. The waves there were comparatively trifling, and the shock was not likely to be very severe. For the rest, he had little time to spare for reflection upon this mishap. Every variety of danger was arising at once; the tempest was concentrated upon the vulnerable point; destruction was imminent.

The darkness was profound for a moment: the lightnings paused—a sort of

sinister connivance. The cloud and the sea became one : there was a dull peal.

This was followed by a terrible outburst. The frame which formed the front of the barriers was swept away. The fragments of beams were visible in the rolling waters. The sea was using the first breakwater as an engine for making a breach in the second.

Gilliatt experienced the feeling of a general who sees his advanced guard driven in.

The second construction of beams resisted the shock. The apparatus behind it was powerfully secured and buttressed. But the broken frame was heavy, and was at the mercy of the waves, which were incessantly hurling it forward and withdrawing it. The ropes and chains which remained unsevered prevented its entirely breaking up, and the qualities which Gilliatt had given it as a means of defense made it, in the end, a more effective weapon of destruction. Instead of a buckler, it had become a battering-ram. Besides this, it was now full of irregularities from breaking ; ends of timbers projected from all parts ; and it was, as it were, covered with teeth and spikes. No sort of arm could have been more effective, or more fitted for the handling of the tempest. It was the projectile, while the sea played the part of the catapult.

The blows succeeded each other with a dismal regularity. Gilliatt, thoughtful and anxious, behind that barricaded portal, listened to the sound of death knocking loudly for admittance.

He reflected with bitterness that, but for the fatal entanglement of the funnel of the *Durande* in the wreck, he would have been at that very moment, and even since the morning, once more at Guernsey, in the port, with the sloop out of danger and with the machinery saved.

The dreaded moment arrived. The destruction was complete. There was a sound like a death-rattle. The entire frame of the breakwater, the double apparatus, crushed and mingled confusedly, came in a whirl of foam, rushing upon the stone barricade like chaos upon a mountain, where it stopped. Here the frag-

ments lay together, a mass of beams penetrable by the waves, but still breaking their force. The conquered barrier struggled nobly against destruction. The waves had shattered it, and in their turn were shattered against it. Though overthrown, it still remained in some degree effective. The rock which barred its passage, an immovable obstacle, held it fast. The defile, as we have said, was very narrow at that point ; the victorious whirlwind had driven forward, mingled and piled up the wreck of the breakwater in this narrow pass. The very violence of the assault, by heaping up the mass and driving the broken ends one into the other, had contributed to make the pile firm. It was destroyed, but immovable. A few pieces of timber only were swept away and dispersed by the waves. One passed through the air very near to Gilliatt. He felt the counter current upon his forehead.

Some waves, however, of that kind which in great tempests return with an imperturbable regularity, swept over the ruins of the breakwater. They fell into the defile, and in spite of the many angles of the passage, set the waters within in commotion. The waters began to roll through the gorge ominously. The mysterious embraces of the waves among the rocks were audible.

What means were there of preventing this agitation extending as far as the sloop ? It would not require a long time for the blasts of wind to create a tempest through all the windings of the pass. A few heavy seas would be sufficient to stave in the sloop and scatter her burden.

Gilliatt shuddered as he reflected.

But he was not disconcerted. No defeat could daunt his soul.

The hurricane had now discovered the true plan of attack, and was rushing fiercely between the two walls of the strait.

Suddenly a crash was heard, resounding and prolonging itself through the defile at some distance behind him : a crash more terrible than any he had yet heard.

It came from the direction of the sloop. Something disastrous was happening there.

Gilliatt hastened towards it.

From the eastern gullet where he was, he could not see the sloop on account of the sharp turns of the pass. At the last turn he stopped and waited for the lighting.

The first flash revealed to him the position of affairs.

The rush of the sea through the eastern entrance had been met by a blast of wind from the other end. A disaster was near at hand.

The sloop had received no visible damage; anchored as she was, the storm had little power over her, but the carcase of the *Durande* was distressed.

In such a tempest, the wreck presented a considerable surface. It was entirely out of the sea in the air, exposed. The breach which Gilliatt had made, and which he had passed the engine through, had rendered the hull still weaker. The keelson was snapped, the vertebral column of the skeleton was broken.

The hurricane had passed over it. Scarcely more than this was needed to complete its destruction. The planking of the deck had bent like an opened book. The dismemberment had begun. It was the noise of this dislocation which had reached Gilliatt's ears in the midst of the tempest.

The disaster which presented itself as he approached appeared almost irremediable.

The square opening which he had cut in the keel had become a gaping wound. The wind had converted the smooth-cut hole into a ragged fracture. This transverse breach separated the wreck in two. The after-part, nearest to the sloop, had remained firm in its bed of rocks. The forward portion which faced him was hanging. A fracture, while it holds, is a sort of hinge. The whole mass oscillated, as the wind moved it, with a doleful noise. Fortunately the sloop was no longer beneath it.

But this swinging movement shook the other portion of the hull, still wedged and immovable as it was between the two *Douvres*. From shaking to casting down the distance is not far. Under the obstinate assaults of the gale, the dislocated part might suddenly carry away

the other portion, which almost touched the sloop. In this case, the whole wreck, together with the sloop and the engine, must be swept into the sea and swallowed up.

All this presented itself to his eyes. It was the end of all. How could it be prevented?

Gilliatt was one of those who are accustomed to snatch the means of safety out of danger itself. He collected his ideas for a moment. Then he hastened to his arsenal and brought his hatchet.

The mallet had served him well, it was now the turn of the axe.

He mounted upon the wreck, got a footing on that part of the planking which had not given way, and leaning over the precipice of the pass between the *Douvres*, he began to cut away the broken joists and the planking which supported the hanging portion of the hull.

His object was to effect the separation of the two parts of the wreck, to disencumber the half which remained firm, to throw overboard what the waves had seized, and thus share the prey with the storm. The hanging portion of the wreck, borne down by the wind and by its own weight, adhered only at one or two points. The entire wreck resembled a folding-screen, one leaf of which, half hanging, beat against the other. Five or six pieces of the planking only, bent and started, but not broken, still held. Their fractures creaked and enlarged at every gust, and the axe, so to speak, had but to help the labor of the wind. This more than half-severed condition, while it increased the facility of the work, also rendered it dangerous. The whole might give way beneath him at any moment.

The tempest had reached its highest point. The convulsion of the sea reached the heavens. Hitherto the storm had been supreme, it had seemed to work its own imperious will, to give the impulse, to drive the waves to frenzy, while still preserving a sort of sinister lucidity. Below was fury—above anger. The heavens are the breath, the ocean only foam, hence the authority of the wind. But the intoxication of its own horrors

had confused it. It had become a mere whirlwind; it was a blindness leading to night. There are times when tempests become frenzied, when the heavens are attacked with a sort of delirium; when the firmament raves and hurls its lightnings blindly. No terror is greater than this. It is a hideous moment. The trembling of the rock was at its height. Every storm has a mysterious course, but now it loses its appointed path. It is the most dangerous point of the tempest. "At that moment," says Thomas Fuller, "the wind is a furious maniac." It is at that instant that that continuous discharge of electricity takes place which Piddington calls "the cascade of lightnings." It is at that instant that in the blackest spot of the clouds, none know why, unless it be to spy the universal terror, a circle of blue light appears, which the Spanish sailors of ancient times called the eye of the tempest, *el ojo de la tempestad*. That terrible eye looked down upon Gilliatt.

Gilliatt on his part was surveying the heavens. He raised his head now. After every stroke of his hatchet he stood erect and gazed upwards, almost haughtily. He was, or seemed to be, too near destruction not to feel self-sustained. Would he despair? No! In the presence of the wildest fury of the ocean he was watchful as well as bold. He planted his feet only where the wreck was firm. He ventured his life, and yet was careful; for his determined spirit, too, had reached its highest point. His strength had grown tenfold greater. He had become heated with his own intrepidity. The strokes of his hatchet were like blows of defiance. He seemed to have gained in directness what the tempest had lost. A pathetic struggle! On the one hand, an indefatigable will; on the other, inexhaustible power. It was a contest with the elements for the prize at his feet. The clouds took the shape of Gorgon masks in the immensity of the heavens; every possible form of terror appeared; the rain came from the sea, the surf from the cloud; phantoms of the wind bent down; meteoric faces revealed themselves and were again eclipsed, leaving the darkness

more monstrous: then there was nothing seen but the torrents coming from all sides—a boiling sea; cumuli heavy with hail, ashen-hued, ragged-edged, appeared seized with a sort of whirling frenzy; strange rattlings filled the air; the inverse currents of electricity observed by Volta darted their sudden flashes from cloud to cloud. The prolongation of the lightnings was terrible; the flashes passed near to Gilliatt. The very ocean seemed astonished. He passed to and fro upon the tottering wreck, making the deck tremble under his steps, striking, cutting, hacking with the hatchet in his hand, pallid in the gleam of the lightning, his long hair streaming, his feet naked, in rags, his face covered with the foam of the sea, but grand still amid that maelstrom of the thunderstorm.

Against these furious powers man has no weapon but his invention. Invention was Gilliatt's triumph. His object was to allow all the dislocated portions of the wreck to fall together. For this reason he cut away the broken portions without entirely separating them, leaving some parts on which they still swung. Suddenly he stopped, holding his axe in the air. The operation was complete. The entire portion went with a crash.

The mass rolled down between the two Douvres, just below Gilliatt, who stood upon the wreck, leaning over and observing the fall. It fell perpendicularly into the water, struck the rocks, and stopped in the defile before touching the bottom. Enough remained out of the water to rise more than twelve feet above the waves. The vertical mass of planking formed a wall between the two Douvres; like the rock overturned crosswise higher up the defile, it allowed only a slight stream of foam to pass through at its two extremities, and thus was a fifth barricade improvised by Gilliatt against the tempest in that passage of the seas.

The hurricane itself, in its blind fury, had assisted in the construction of this last barrier.

It was fortunate that the proximity of the two walls had prevented the mass of wreck from falling to the bottom. This

circumstance gave the barricade greater height; the water, besides, could flow under the obstacle, which diminished the power of the waves. That which passes below cannot pass over. This is partly the secret of the floating breakwater.

Henceforth, let the storm do what it might, there was nothing to fear for the sloop or the machinery. The water around them could not become agitated again. Between the barrier of the Douvres, which covered them on the west, and the barricade which protected them from the east, no heavy sea or wind could reach them.

Gilliatt had plucked safety out of the catastrophe itself. The storm had been his fellow-laborer in the work.

This done, he took a little water in the palm of his hand from one of the rain-pools, and drank: and then, looking upward at the storm, said with a smile, "Bungler!"

Human intelligence combating with brute force experiences an ironical joy in demonstrating the stupidity of its antagonist, and compelling it to serve the very objects of its fury, and Gilliatt felt something of that immemorial desire to insult his invisible enemy, which is as old as the heroes of the *Iliad*.

He descended to the sloop and examined it by the gleam of the lightning. The relief which he had been able to give to his distressed bark was well timed. She had been much shaken during the last hour, and had begun to give way. A hasty glance revealed no serious injury. Nevertheless, he was certain that the vessel had been subjected to violent shocks. As soon as the waves had subsided, the hull had righted itself; the anchors had held fast; as to the machine, the four chains had supported it admirably.

While Gilliatt was completing this survey, something white passed before his eyes and vanished in the gloom. It was a sea-mew.

No sight could be more welcome in tempestuous weather. When the birds reappear the storm is departing. The thunder redoubled; another good sign.

The violent efforts of the storm had

broken its force. All mariners know that the last ordeal is severe, but short. The excessive violence of the thunderstorm is the herald of the end.

The rain stopped suddenly. Then there was only a surly rumbling in the heavens. The storm ceased with the suddenness of a plank falling to the ground. The immense mass of clouds became disorganized. A strip of clear sky appeared between them. Gilliatt was astonished: it was broad daylight.

The tempest had lasted nearly twenty hours.

The wind which had brought the storm carried it away. A dark pile was diffused over the horizon, the broken clouds were flying in confusion across the sky. From one end to the other of the line there was a movement of retreat: a long muttering was heard, gradually decreasing, a few last drops of rain fell, and all those dark masses charged with thunder departed like a terrible multitude of chariots.

Suddenly the wide expanse of sky became blue.

Gilliatt perceived that he was wearied. Sleep swoops down upon the exhausted frame like a bird upon its prey. He drooped and sank upon the deck of the bark without choosing his position, and there slept. Stretched at length and inert, he remained thus for some hours, scarcely distinguishable from the beams and joists among which he lay.

BOOK IV.

PITFALLS IN THE WAY.

I.

HE WHO IS HUNGRY IS NOT ALONE.

WHEN he awakened he was hungry.

The sea was growing calmer. But there was still a heavy swell, which made his departure, for the present at least, impossible. The day, too, was far advanced.

For the sloop with its burden to get to Guernsey before midnight, it was necessary to start in the morning.

Although pressed by hunger, Gilliatt began by stripping himself, the only means of getting warmth. His clothing was saturated by the storm, but the rain had washed out the sea-water, which rendered it possible to dry them.

He kept nothing on but his trousers, which he turned up nearly to the knees.

His overcoat, jacket, overalls, and sheepskin he spread out and fixed with large round stones here and there.

Then he thought of eating.

He had recourse to his knife, which he was careful to sharpen, and to keep always in good condition; and he detached from the rocks a few limpets, similar in kind to the *clonisses* of the Mediterranean. It is well known that these are eaten raw: but after so many labors, so various and so rude, the pittance was meagre. His biscuit was gone; but of water he had now abundance.

He took advantage of the receding tide to wander among the rocks in search of crayfish. There was extent enough of rock to hope for a successful search.

But he had not reflected that he could do nothing with these without fire to cook them. If he had taken the trouble to go to his store-cavern, he would have found it inundated with the rain. His wood and coal were drowned, and of his store of tow, which served him for tinder, there was not a fibre which was not saturated. No means remained of lighting a fire.

For the rest, his blower was completely disorganized. The screen of the hearth of his forge was broken down; the storm had sacked and devastated his workshop. With what tools and apparatus had escaped the general wreck, he could still have done carpentry work; but he could not have accomplished any of the labors of the smith. Gilliatt, however, never thought of his workshop for a moment.

Drawn in another direction by the pangs of hunger, he had pursued without much reflection his search for food. He wandered, not in the gorge of the rocks, but outside among the smaller breakers. It was there

that the *Durande*, ten weeks previously, had first struck upon the sunken reef.

For the search that Gilliatt was prosecuting, this part was more favorable than the interior. At low water the crabs are accustomed to crawl out into the air. They seem to like to warm themselves in the sun, where they swarm sometimes to the disgust of loiterers, who recognize in these creatures, with their awkward side-long gait, climbing clumsily from crack to crack the lower stages of the rocks like the steps of a staircase, a sort of sea vermin.

For two months Gilliatt had lived upon these vermin of the sea.

On this day, however, the crayfish and crabs were both wanting. The tempest had driven them into their solitary retreats; and they had not yet mustered courage to venture abroad. Gilliatt held his open knife in his hand, and from time to time scraped a cockle from under the bunches of sea-weed, which he ate while still walking.

He could not have been far from the very spot where *Sieur Clubin* had perished.

As Gilliatt was determining to content himself with the sea-urchins and the *châtaines de mer*, a little clattering noise at his feet aroused his attention. A large crab, startled by his approach, had just dropped into a pool. The water was shallow, and he did not lose sight of it.

He chased the crab along the base of the rock; the crab moved fast.

Suddenly it was gone.

It had buried itself in some crevice under the rock.

Gilliatt clutched the projections of the rock, and stretched out to observe where it shelved away under the water.

As he suspected, there was an opening there in which the creature had evidently taken refuge. It was more than a crevice; it was a kind of porch.

The sea entered beneath it, but was not deep. The bottom was visible, covered with large pebbles. The pebbles were green and clothed with *confervæ*, indicating that they were never dry. They were like the tops of a number of heads of infants, covered with a kind of green hair.

Holding his knife between his teeth, Gilliatt descended, by the help of feet and hands, from the upper part of the escarpment, and leaped into the water. It reached almost to his shoulders.

He made his way through the porch, and found himself in a blind passage, with a roof in the form of a rude arch over his head. The walls were polished and slippery. The crab was nowhere visible. He gained his feet and advanced in daylight growing fainter, so that he began to lose the power to distinguish objects.

At about fifteen paces the vaulted roof ended overhead. He had penetrated beyond the blind passage. There was here more space, and consequently more daylight. The pupils of his eyes, moreover, had dilated; he could see pretty clearly. He was taken by surprise.

He had made his way again into the singular cavern which he had visited in the previous month. The only difference was that he had entered by the way of the sea.

It was through the submarine arch, that he had remarked before, that he had just entered. At certain low tides it was accessible.

His eyes became more accustomed to the place. His vision became clearer and clearer. He was astonished. He found himself again in that extraordinary palace of shadows; saw again before his eyes that vaulted roof, those columns, those purple and blood-like stains, that vegetation rich with gems, and at the farther end, that crypt or sanctuary, and that altar-like stone. He took little notice of these details, but their impression was in his mind, and he saw that the place was unchanged.

He observed before him, at a certain height in the wall, the crevice through which he had penetrated the first time, and which, from the point where he now stood, appeared inaccessible.

Near the moulded arch, he remarked those low dark grottoes, a sort of caves within the cavern, which he had already observed from a distance. He now stood nearer to them. The entrance to the nearest to him was out of the water, and easily approachable. Nearer still than this re-

cess he noticed, above the level of the water, and within reach of his hand, a horizontal fissure. It seemed to him probable that the crab had taken refuge there, and he plunged his hand in as far as he was able, and groped about in that dusky aperture.

Suddenly he felt himself seized by the arm. A strange indescribable horror thrilled through him.

Some living thing, thin, rough, flat, cold, slimy, had twisted itself round his naked arm, in the dark depth below. It crept upward towards his chest. Its pressure was like a tightening cord, its steady persistence like that of a screw. In less than a moment some mysterious spiral form had passed round his wrist and elbow, and had reached his shoulder. A sharp point penetrated beneath the armpit.

Gilliatt recoiled; but he had scarcely power to move! He was, as it were, nailed to the place. With his left hand, which was disengaged, he seized his knife, which he still held between his teeth, and with that hand, holding the knife, he supported himself against the rocks, while he made a desperate effort to withdraw his arm. He succeeded only in disturbing his persecutor, which wound itself still tighter. It was supple as leather, strong as steel, cold as night.

A second form, sharp, elongated, and narrow, issued out of the crevice, like a tongue out of monstrous jaws. It seemed to lick his naked body. Then suddenly stretching out, it became longer and thinner, as it crept over his skin, and wound itself round him. At the same time a terrible sense of pain, comparable to nothing he had ever known, compelled all his muscles to contract. He felt upon his skin a number of flat rounded points. It seemed as if innumerable suckers had fastened to his flesh and were about to drink his blood.

A third long undulating shape issued from the hole in the rock; seemed to feel its way about his body; lashed round his ribs like a cord, and fixed itself there.

Agony when at its height is mute. Gilliatt uttered no cry. There was sufficient light for him to see the repulsive forms

which had entangled themselves about him. A fourth ligature, but this one swift as an arrow, darted towards his stomach and wound around him there.

It was impossible to sever or tear away the slimy bands which were twisted tightly round his body, and were adhering by a number of points. Each of the points was the focus of frightful and singular pangs. It was as if numberless small mouths were devouring him at the same time.

A fifth long, slimy, riband-shaped strip issued from the hole. It passed over the others, and wound itself tightly around his chest. The compression increased his sufferings. He could scarcely breathe.

These living thongs were pointed at their extremities, but broadened like a blade of a sword towards its hilt. All belonged evidently to the same centre. They crept and glided about him; he felt the strange points of pressure, which seemed to him like mouths, change their places from time to time.

Suddenly a large, round, flattened, glutinous mass issued from beneath the crevice. It was the centre; the five thongs were attached to it like spokes to the nave of a wheel. On the opposite side of this disgusting monster appeared the commencement of three other tentacles, the ends of which remained under the rock. In the middle of this slimy mass appeared two eyes.

The eyes were fixed on Gilliatt.

He recognized the Devil Fish.

. II.

THE MONSTER.

It is difficult for those who have not seen it to believe in the existence of the devil-fish.

Compared to this creature, the ancient hydras are insignificant.

At times we are tempted to imagine that the vague forms which float in our dreams may encounter in the realm of the Possible attractive forces, having power to fix their lineaments, and shape living beings, out of these creatures of our slumbers. The Unknown has power over

these strange visions, and out of them composes monsters. Orpheus, Homer, and Hesiod imagined only the Chimera: Providence has created this terrible creature of the sea.

Creation abounds in monstrous forms of life. The wherefore of this perplexes and affrights the religious thinker.

If terror were the object of its creation, nothing could be imagined more perfect than the devil-fish.

The whale has enormous bulk, the devil-fish is comparatively small; the jararaca makes a hissing noise, the devil-fish is mute; the rhinoceros has a horn, the devil-fish has none; the scorpion has a dart, the devil-fish has no dart; the shark has sharp fins, the devil-fish has no fins; the vespertilio-bat has wings with claws, the devil-fish has no wings; the porcupine has his spines, the devil-fish has no spines; the sword-fish has his sword, the devil-fish has none; the torpedo has his electric spark, the devil-fish has none; the toad has its poison, the devil-fish has none; the viper has its venom, the devil-fish has no venom; the lion has its talons, the devil-fish has no talons; the griffon has its beak, the devil-fish has no beak; the crocodile has its jaws, the devil-fish has no teeth.

The devil-fish has no muscular organization, no menacing cry, no breastplate, no horn, no dart, no claw, no tail with which to hold or bruise; no cutting fins, or wings with nails, no prickles, no sword, no electric discharge, no poison, no talons, no beak, no teeth. Yet he is of all creatures the most formidably armed.

What, then, is the devil-fish? It is the sea vampire.

The swimmer who, attracted by the beauty of the spot, ventures among breakers in the open sea, where the still waters hide the splendors of the deep, or in the hollows of unfrequented rocks, in unknown caverns abounding in sea plants, testacea, and crustacea, under the deep portals of the ocean, runs the risk of meeting it. If that fate should be yours, be not curious, but fly. The intruder enters there dazzled; but quits the spot in terror.

This frightful apparition, which is always possible among the rocks in the open sea, is a grayish form which undulates in the water. It is of the thickness of a man's arm, and in length nearly five feet. Its outline is ragged. Its form resembles an umbrella closed, and without handle. This irregular mass advances slowly towards you. Suddenly it opens, and eight radii issue abruptly from around a face with two eyes. These radii are alive: their undulation is like lambent flames; they resemble, when opened, the spokes of a wheel, of four or five feet in diameter. A terrible expansion! It springs upon its prey.

The devil-fish harpoons its victim.

It winds around the sufferer, covering and entangling him in its long folds. Underneath it is yellow; above, a dull, earthy hue: nothing could render that inexplicable shade dust colored. Its form is spider-like, but its tints are like those of the chamelion. When irritated it becomes violet. Its most horrible characteristic is its softness.

Its folds strangle, its contact paralyzes.

It has an aspect like gangrened or scabrous flesh. It is a monstrous embodiment of disease.

It adheres closely to its prey, and cannot be torn away; a fact which is due to its power of exhausting air. The eight antennæ, large at their roots, diminish gradually, and end in needle-like points. Underneath each of these feelers range two rows of pustules, decreasing in size, the largest ones near the head, the smaller at the extremities. Each row contains twenty-five of these. There are, therefore, fifty pustules to each feeler, and the creature possesses in the whole four hundred. These pustules are capable of acting like cupping-glasses. They are cartilaginous substances, cylindrical, horny, and livid. Upon the large species they diminish gradually from the diameter of a five-franc piece to the size of a split pea. These small tubes can be thrust out and withdrawn by the animal at will. They are capable of piercing to a depth of more than an inch.

This sucking apparatus has all the reg-

ularity and delicacy of a key-board. It stands forth at one moment and disappears the next. The most perfect sensitiveness cannot equal the contractibility of these suckers; always proportioned to the internal movement of the animal, and its exterior circumstances. The monster is endowed with the qualities of the sensitive plant.

This animal is the same as those which mariners call Poulps; which science designates Cephalopectera, and which ancient legends call Krakens. It is the English sailors who call them "Devil-fish," and sometimes Bloodsuckers. In the Channel Islands they are called *pieuvres*.

They are rare at Guernsey, very small at Jersey; but near the Island of Sark are numerous as well as very large.

An engraving in Sonnini's edition of Buffon represents a Cephalopectera crushing a frigate. Denis Montfort, in fact, considers the Poulp, or Octopod, of high latitudes, strong enough to destroy a ship. Bory Saint Vincent doubts this; but he shows that in our regions they will attack men. Near Brecq-Hou, in Sark, they show a cave where a devil-fish a few years since seized and drowned a lobster-fisher. Peron and Lamarck are in error in their belief that the "poulp" having no fins cannot swim. He who writes these lines has seen with his own eyes, at Sark, in the cavern called the Boutiques, a pieuvre swimming and pursuing a bather. When captured and killed, this specimen was found to be four English feet broad, and it was possible to count its four hundred suckers. The monster thrust them out convulsively in the agony of death.

According to Denis Montfort, one of those observers whose marvellous intuition sinks or raises them to the level of magicians, the poulp is almost endowed with the passions of man: it has its hatreds. In fact, in the Absolute to be hideous is to hate.

Hideousness struggles under the natural law of elimination, which necessarily renders it hostile.

When swimming, the devil-fish rests, so to speak, in its sheath. It swims with all its parts drawn close. It may be likened

to a sleeve sewn up with a closed fist within. The protuberance, which is the head, pushes the water aside and advances with a vague undulatory movement. Its two eyes, though large, are indistinct, being of the color of the water.

When in ambush, or seeking its prey, it retires into itself, grows smaller and condenses itself. It is then scarcely distinguishable in the submarine twilight.

At such times, it looks like a mere ripple in the water. It resembles anything except a living creature.

The devil-fish is crafty. When its victim in unsuspecting, it opens suddenly.

A glutinous mass, endowed with a malignant will, what can be more horrible?

It is in the most beautiful azure depths of the limpid water that this hideous, voracious polyp delights. It always conceals itself, a fact which increases its terrible associations. When they are seen, it is almost invariably after they have been captured.

At night, however, and particularly in the hot season, it becomes phosphorescent. These horrible creatures have their passions; their submarine nuptials. Then it adorns itself, burns and illumines; and from the height of some rock, it may be seen in the deep obscurity of the waves below, expanding with a pale irradiation—a spectral sun.

The devil-fish not only swims, it walks. It is partly fish, partly reptile. It crawls upon the bed of the sea. At these times, it makes use of its eight feelers, and creeps along in the fashion of a species of swift-moving caterpillar.

It has no blood, no bones, no flesh. It is soft and flabby; a skin with nothing inside. Its eight tentacles may be turned inside out like the fingers of a glove.

It has a single orifice in the centre of its radii, which appears at first to be neither the vent nor the mouth. It is, in fact, both one and the other. The orifice performs a double function. The entire creature is cold.

The jelly-fish of the Mediterranean is repulsive. Contact with that animated gelatinous substance which envelopes the bather, in which the hands sink, and the

nails scratch ineffectively; which can be torn without killing it, and which can be plucked off without entirely removing it—that fluid and yet tenacious creature which slips through the fingers, is disgusting; but no horror can equal the sudden apparition of the devil-fish, that Medusa with its eight serpents.

No grasp is like the sudden strain of the cephaloptera.

It is with the sucking apparatus that it attacks. The victim is oppressed by a vacuum drawing at numberless points: it is not a clawing or a biting, but an indescribable scarification. A tearing of the flesh is terrible, but less terrible than a sucking of the blood. Claws are harmless compared with the horrible action of these natural air-cups. The talons of the wild beast enter into your flesh; but with the cephaloptera it is you who enter into the creature. The muscles swell, the fibres of the body are contorted, the skin cracks under the loathsome oppression, the blood spurts out and mingles horribly with the lymph of the monster, which clings to its victim by innumerable hideous mouths. The hydra incorporates itself with the man; the man becomes one with the hydra. The spectre lies upon you: the tiger can only devour you; the devil-fish, horrible, sucks your life-blood away. He draws you to him, and into himself; while bound down, glued to the ground, powerless, you feel yourself gradually emptied into this horrible pouch, which is the monster itself.

These strange animals, Science, in accordance with its habit of excessive caution even in the face of facts, at first rejects as fabulous; then she decides to observe them; then she dissects, classifies, catalogues, and labels; then procures specimens, and exhibits them in glass cases in museums. They enter then into her nomenclature; are designated mollusks, invertebrata, radiata: she determines their position in the animal world a little above the calamaries, a little below the cuttle-fish; she finds for these hydras of the sea an analogous creature in fresh water called the argyronecte; she divides them into great, medium and small kinds;

she admits more readily the existence of the small than of the large species, which is, however, the tendency of science in all countries, for she is by nature more microscopic than telescopic. She regards them from the point of view of their construction, and calls them Cephaloptera; counts their antennæ, and calls them Octopedes. This done, she leaves them. Where science drops them, philosophy takes them up.

Philosophy in her turn studies these creatures. She goes both less far and further. She does not dissect, but meditate. Where the scalpel has labored, she plunges the hypothesis. She seeks the final cause. Eternal perplexity of the thinker. These creatures disturb his ideas of the Creator. They are hideous surprises. They are the death's-head at the feast of contemplation. The philosopher determines their characteristics in dread. They are the concrete forms of evil. What attitude can he take towards this treason of creation against herself? To whom can he look for the solution of these riddles? The Possible is a terrible matrix. Monsters are mysteries in their concrete form. Portions of shade issue from the mass, and something within detaches itself, rolls, floats, condenses, borrows elements from the ambient darkness, becomes subject to unknown polarizations, assumes a kind of life, furnishes itself with some unimagined form from the obscurity, and with some terrible spirit from the miasma, and wanders ghostlike among living things. It is as if night itself assumed the forms of animals. But for what good? With what object? Thus we come again to the eternal questioning.

These animals are indeed phantoms as much as monsters. They are proved and yet improbable. Their fate is to exist in spite of *à priori* reasonings. They are the amphibia of the shore which separates life from death. Their unreality makes their existence puzzling. They touch the frontier of man's domain and people the region of chimeras. We deny the possibility of the vampire, and the cephaloptera appears. Their swarming is a certainty which disconcerts our confidence. Optim-

ism, which is nevertheless in the right, becomes silenced in their presence. They form the visible extremity of the dark circles. They mark the transition of our reality into another. They seem to belong to that commencement of terrible life which the dreamer sees confusedly through the loophole of the night.

That multiplication of monsters, first in the Invisible, then in the Possible, has been suspected, perhaps perceived by magi and philosophers in their austere ecstasies and profound contemplations. Hence the conjecture of a material hell. The demon is simply the invisible tiger. The wild beast which devours souls has been presented to the eyes of human beings by St. John, and by Dante in his vision of Hell.

If, in truth, the invisible circles of creation continue indefinitely, if after one there is yet another, and so forth in illimitable progression; if that chain, which for our part we are resolved to doubt, really exist, the cephaloptera at one extremity proves Satan at the other. It is certain that the wrong-doer at one end proves the existence of wrong at the other.

Every malignant creature, like every perverted intelligence, is a sphinx. A terrible sphinx propounding a terrible riddle; the riddle of the existence of Evil.

It is this perfection of evil which has sometimes sufficed to incline powerful intellects to a faith in the duality of the Deity, towards that terrible bifrons of the Manichæans.

A piece of silk stolen during the last war from the palace of the Emperor of China represents a shark eating a crocodile, who is eating a serpent, who is devouring an eagle, who is preying on a swallow, who in his turn is eating a caterpillar.

All nature which is under our observation is thus alternately devouring and devoured. The prey prey on each other.

Learned men, however, who are also philosophers, and therefore optimists in their view of creation, find, or believe they find, an explanation. Among others, Bonnet of Geneva, that mysterious exact thinker, who was opposed to Buffon, as in later times Geoffroy St. Hilaire has been to Cuvier, was struck with the idea of the

final object. His notions may be summed up thus: universal death necessitates universal sepulture; the devourers are the sextons of the system of nature. All created things enter into and form the elements of other. To decay is to nourish. Such is the terrible law from which not even man himself escapes.

In our world of twilight this fatal order of things produces monsters. You ask for what purpose. We find the solution here.

But *is* this the solution? Is this the answer to our questionings? And if so, why not some different order of things? Thus the question returns.

Let us live: be it so.

But let us endeavor that death shall be progress. Let us aspire to an existence in which these mysteries shall be made clear. Let us follow that conscience which leads us thither.

For let us never forget that the highest is only attained through the high.

III.

ANOTHER KIND OF SEA-COMBAT.

SUCH was the creature in whose power Gilliatt had fallen for some minutes.

The monster was the inhabitant of the grotto; the terrible genii of the place. A kind of sombre demon of the water.

All the splendors of the cavern existed for it alone.

On the day of the previous month when Gilliatt had first penetrated into the grotto, the dark outline, vaguely perceived by him in the ripples of the secret waters, was this monster. It was here in its home.

When entering for the second time into the cavern in pursuit of the crab, he had observed the crevice in which he supposed that the crab had taken refuge, the *pieuvre* was there lying in wait for prey.

Is it possible to imagine that secret ambush?

No bird would brood, no egg would burst to life, no flower would dare to open, no breast to give milk, no heart to love, no spirit to soar, under the influence of

that apparition of evil watching with sinister patience in the dusk.

Gilliatt had thrust his arm deep into the opening; the monster had snapped at it. It held him fast, as the spider holds the fly.

He was in the water up to his belt; his naked feet clutching the slippery roundness of the huge stones at the bottom; his right arm bound and rendered powerless by the flat coils of the long tentacles of the creature, and his body almost hidden under the folds and cross folds of this horrible bandage.

Of the eight arms of the devil-fish three adhered to the rock, while five encircled Gilliatt. In this way, clinging to the granite on the one hand, and with the other to its human prey, it enchained him to the rock. Two hundred and fifty suckers were upon him, tormenting him with agony and loathing. He was grasped by gigantic hands, the fingers of which were each nearly a yard long, and furnished inside with living blisters eating into the flesh.

As we have said, it is impossible to tear one's self from the folds of the devil-fish. The attempt ends only in a firmer grasp. The monster clings with more determined force. Its effort increases with that of his victim; every struggle produces a tightening of its ligatures.

Gilliatt had but one resource, his knife.

His left hand only was free; but the reader knows with what power he could use it. It might have been said that he had two right hands.

His open knife was in his hand.

The antenna of the devil-fish cannot be cut; it is a leathery substance impossible to divide with the knife, it slips under the edge; its position in attack also is such that to cut it would be to wound the victim's own flesh.

The creature is formidable, but there is a way of resisting it. The fishermen of Sark know this, as does any one who has seen them execute certain abrupt movements in the sea. The porpoises know it also; they have a way of biting the cuttle-fish which decapitates it. Hence the

frequent sight on the sea of pen-fish, poulps, and cuttle-fish without heads.

The cephaloptera, in fact, is only vulnerable through the head.

Gilliatt was not ignorant of this fact.

He had never seen a devil-fish of this size. His first encounter was with one of the larger species. Another would have been powerless with terror.

With the devil-fish, as with a furious bull, there is a certain moment in the conflict which must be seized. It is the instant when the bull lowers the neck; it is the instant when the devil-fish advances its head. The movement is rapid. He who loses that moment is destroyed.

The things we have described occupied only a few moments. Gilliatt, however, felt the increasing power of its innumerable suckers.

The monster is cunning; it tries first to stupefy its prey. It seizes and then pauses awhile.

Gilliatt grasped his knife; the sucking increased.

He looked at the monster, which seemed to look at him.

Suddenly it loosened from the rock its sixth antenna, and darting it at him, seized him by the left arm.

At the same moment it advanced its head with a violent movement. In one second more its mouth would have fastened on his breast. Bleeding in the sides, and with his two arms entangled, he would have been a dead man.

But Gilliatt was watchful. He avoided the antenna, and at the moment when the monster darted forward to fasten on his breast, he struck it with the knife clenched in his left hand. There were two convulsions in opposite directions; that of the devil-fish and that of its prey. The movement was rapid as a double flash of lightnings.

He had plunged the blade of his knife into the flat slimy substance, and by a rapid movement, like the flourish of a whip in the air, describing a circle round the two eyes, he wrenched the head off as a man would draw a tooth.

The struggle was ended. The folds relaxed. The monster dropped away, like

the slow detaching of bands. The four hundred suckers, deprived of their sustaining power, dropped at once from the man and the rock. The mass sank to the bottom of the water.

Breathless with the struggle, Gilliatt could perceive upon the stones at his feet two shapeless, slimy heaps, the head on one side, the remainder of the monster on the other.

Fearing, nevertheless, some convulsive return of his agony he recoiled to avoid the reach of the dreaded tentacles.

But the monster was quite dead.

Gilliatt closed his knife.

IV.

NOTHING IS HIDDEN, NOTHING LOST.

It was time that he killed the devil-fish. He was almost suffocated. His right arm and his chest were purple. Numberless little swellings were distinguishable upon them; the blood flowed from them here and there. The remedy for these wounds is sea-water. Gilliatt plunged into it, rubbing himself at the same time with the palms of his hands. The swellings disappeared under the friction.

By stepping further into the waters he had, without perceiving it, approached to the species of recess already observed by him near the crevice where he had been attacked by the devil-fish.

This recess stretched obliquely under the great walls of the cavern, and was dry. The large pebbles which had become heaped up there had raised the bottom above the level of ordinary tides. The entrance was a rather large elliptical arch; a man could enter by stooping. The green light of the submarine grotto penetrated into it and lighted it feebly.

It happened that, while hastily rubbing his skin, Gilliatt raised his eyes mechanically.

He was able to see far into the cavern.

He shuddered.

He fancied that he perceived, in the furthest depth of the dusky recess, something smiling.

Gilliatt had never heard the word "hallucination," but he was familiar with the idea. Those mysterious encounters with the invisible, which, for the sake of avoiding the difficulty of explaining them, we call hallucinations, are in nature. Illusions or realities, visions are a fact. He who has the gift will see them. Gilliatt, as we have said, was a dreamer. He had, at times, the faculty of a seer. It was not in vain that he had spent his days in musing among solitary places.

He imagined himself the dupe of one of those mirages which he had more than once beheld when in his dreamy moods.

The opening was somewhat in the shape of a chalk burner's oven. It was a low niche with projections like basket-handles. Its abrupt groins contracted gradually as far as the extremity of the crypt, where the heaps of round stones and the rocky roof joined.

Gilliatt entered, and lowering his head, advanced towards the object in the distance.

There was indeed something smiling.

It was a death's head; but it was not only the head. There was the entire skeleton. A complete human skeleton was lying in the cavern.

In such a position a bold man will continue his researches.

Gilliatt cast his eyes around. He was surrounded by a multitude of crabs. The multitude did not stir. They were but empty shells.

These groups were scattered here and there among the masses of pebbles in irregular constellations.

Gilliatt, having his eyes fixed elsewhere, had walked among them without perceiving them.

At this extremity of the crypt, where he had now penetrated, there was a still greater heap of remains. It was a confused mass of legs, antennæ, and mandibles. Claws stood wide open; bony shells lay still under their bristling prickles; some reversed showed their livid hollows. The heap was like a *mêlée* of besiegers who had fallen, and lay massed together.

The skeleton was partly buried in this heap.

Under this confused mass of scales and tentacles, the eye perceived the cranium with its furrows, the vertebræ, the thigh bones, the tibias, and the long-jointed finger bones with their nails. The frame of the ribs was filled with crabs. Some heart had once beat there. The green mould of the sea had settled round the sockets of the eyes. Limpets had left their slime upon the bony nostrils. For the rest, there were not in this cave within the rocks either sea-gulls, or weeds, or a breath of air. All was still. The teeth grinned.

The sombre side of laughter is that strange mockery of its expression which is peculiar to a human skull.

This marvellous palace of the deep, inlaid and incrustated with all the gems of the sea, had at length revealed and told its secret. It was a savage haunt; the devil-fish inhabited it; it was also a tomb, in which the body of a man reposed.

The skeleton and the creatures around it oscillated vaguely in the reflections of the subterranean water which trembled upon the roof and wall. The horrible multitude of crabs looked as if finishing their repast. These crustacea seemed to be devouring the carcase. Nothing could be more strange than the aspect of the dead vermin upon their dead prey.

Gilliatt had beneath his eyes the storehouse of the devil-fish.

It was a dismal sight. The crabs had devoured the man: the devil-fish had devoured the crabs.

There were no remains of clothing anywhere visible. The man must have been seized naked.

Gilliatt, attentively examining, began to remove the shells from the skeleton. What had this man been? The body was admirably dissected; it looked as if prepared for the study of its anatomy; all the flesh was stripped; not a muscle remained; not a bone was missing. If Gilliatt had been learned in science, he might have demonstrated the fact. The periosteæ, denuded of their covering, were white and smooth, as if they had been polished. But for some green mould of sea-mosses here and there, they would have been like

ivory. The cartilaginous divisions were delicately inlaid and arranged. The tomb sometimes produces this dismal mosaic work.

The body was, as it were, interred under the heap of dead crabs. Gilliatt disinterred it.

Suddenly he stooped, and examined more closely.

He had perceived around the vertebral column a sort of belt.

It was a leathern girdle, which had evidently been worn buckled upon the waist of the man when alive.

The leather was moist ; the buckle rusty.

Gilliatt pulled the girdle ; the vertebræ of the skeleton resisted, and he was compelled to break through them in order to remove it. A crust of small shells had begun to form upon it.

He felt it, and found a hard substance within, apparently of square form. It was useless to endeavor to unfasten the buckle, so he cut the leather with his knife.

The girdle contained a little iron box and some pieces of gold. Gilliatt counted twenty guineas.

The iron box was an old sailor's tobacco-box, opening and shutting with a spring. It was very tight and rusty. The spring being completely oxidized, would not work.

Once more the knife served Gilliatt in a difficulty. A pressure with the point of the blade caused the lid to fly up.

The box was open.

There was nothing inside but pieces of paper.

A little roll of very thin sheets, folded in four, was fitted in the bottom of the box. They were damp, but not injured. The box, hermetically sealed, had preserved them. Gilliatt unfolded them.

They were three bank notes of one thousand pounds sterling each ; making together seventy-five thousand francs.

Gilliatt folded them again, replaced them in the box, taking advantage of the space which remained to add the twenty guineas ; and then reclosed the box as well as he could.

Next he examined the girdle.

The leather, which had originally been polished outside, was rough within. Upon

this tawny ground some letters had been traced in black thick ink. Gilliatt deciphered them, and read the words "Sieur Clubin."

V.

THE FATAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIX INCHES AND TWO FEET.

GILLIATT replaced the box in the girdle, and placed the girdle in the pocket of his trousers.

He left the skeleton among the crabs, with the remains of the devil-fish beside it.

While he had been occupied with the devil-fish and the skeleton, the rising tide had submerged the entrance to the cave. He was only enabled to leave it by plunging under the arched entrance. He got through without difficulty ; for he knew the entrance well, and was master of these gymnastics in the sea.

It is easy to understand the drama which had taken place there during the ten weeks preceding. One monster had preyed upon another ; the devil-fish had seized Clubin.

These two embodiments of treachery had met in the inexorable darkness. There had been an encounter at the bottom of the sea between these two compounds of mystery and watchfulness ; the monster had destroyed the man : a horrible fulfilment of justice.

The crab feeds on carrion, the devil-fish on crabs. The devil-fish seizes as it passes any swimming animal—an otter, a dog, a man if it can—sucks the blood, and leaves the body at the bottom of the water. The crabs are the spider-formed scavengers of the sea. Putrifying flesh attracts them ; they crowd round it, devour the body, and are in their turn consumed by the devil-fish. Dead creatures disappear in the crab, the crab disappears in the pieuvre. This is the law which we have already pointed out.

The devil-fish had laid hold of him, and drowned him. Some wave had carried his body into the cave, and deposited it at the extremity of the inner cavern, where Gilliatt had discovered it.

He returned searching among the rocks

for sea-urchins and limpets. He had no desire for crabs; to have eaten them now would have seemed to him like feeding upon human flesh.

For the rest, he thought of nothing but of eating what he could before starting. Nothing now interposed to prevent his departure. Great tempests are always followed by a calm, which lasts sometimes several days. There was, therefore, no danger from the sea. Gilliatt had resolved to leave the rocks on the following day. It was important, on account of the tide, to keep the barrier between the two Douvres during the night, but he intended to remove it at daybreak, to push the sloop out to sea, and set sail for St. Sampson. The light breeze which was blowing came from the south-west, which was precisely the wind which he would want.

It was in the first quarter of the moon, in the month of May; the days were long.

When Gilliatt, having finished his wanderings among the rocks, and appeased his appetite to some extent, returned to the passage between the two Douvres, where he had left the sloop, the sun had set, the twilight was increased by that pale light which comes from a crescent moon; the tide had attained its height, and was beginning to ebb. The funnel standing upright above the sloop, had been covered by the foam during the tempest with a coating of salt which glittered white in the light of the moon.

This circumstance reminded Gilliatt that the storm had inundated the sloop, both with surf and rain-water, and that if he meant to start in the morning, it would be necessary to bale it out.

Before leaving to go in quest of crabs, he had ascertained that it had about six inches of water in the hold. The scoop which he used for the purpose, would, he thought, be sufficient for throwing the water overboard.

On arriving at the barrier, Gilliatt was struck with terror. There were nearly two feet of water in the sloop. A terrible discovery; the bark had sprung a leak.

She had been making water gradually during his absence. Burdened as she was,

two feet of water was a perilous addition. A little more, and she must inevitably founder. If he had returned but an hour later, he would probably have found nothing above water but the funnel and the mast.

There was not a minute to be lost in deliberation. It was absolutely necessary to find the leakage, stop it, and then empty the vessel, or, at all events, lighten it. The pumps of the *Durande* had been lost in the break-up of the wreck. He was reduced to use the scoop of the bark.

To find the leak was the most urgent necessity.

Gilliatt set to work immediately, and without even giving himself time to dress. He shivered; but he no longer felt either hunger or cold.

The water continued to gain upon his vessel. Fortunately there was no wind. The slightest swell would have been fatal.

The moon went down.

Bent low, and plunged in the water deeper than his waist, he groped about for a long time. He discovered the mischief at last.

During the gale, at the critical moment when the sloop had swerved, the strong bark had bumped and grazed rather violently on the rocks. One of the projections of the Little Douvre had made a fracture in the starboard side of the hull.

The leak unluckily—it might almost have been said, maliciously—had been made near the joint of the two riders, a fact which, joined with the fury of the hurricane, had prevented him perceiving it during his dark and rapid survey in the height of the storm.

The fracture was alarming on account of its size; but fortunately, although the vessel was sunk lower than usual by the weight of water, it was still above the ordinary water-line.

At the moment when the accident had occurred, the waves had rolled heavily into the defile, and had flooded through the breach; and the vessel had sunk a few inches under the additional weight, so that, even after the subsidence of the water, the weight having raised the water-line, had kept the hole still under

the surface. Hence the imminence of the danger. But if he could succeed in stopping the leak, he could empty the sloop; the hole once staunched, the vessel would rise to its usual water-line, the fracture would be above water, and in this position the repair would be easy, or at least possible. He had still, as we have already said, his carpenter's tools in good condition.

But meanwhile what uncertainty must he not endure! What perils, what chances of accidents! He heard the water rising inexorably. One shock, and all would have perished. What misery seemed in store for him. Perhaps his endeavors were even now too late.

He reproached himself bitterly. He thought that he ought to have seen the damage immediately. The six inches of water in the hold ought to have suggested it to him. He had been stupid enough to attribute these six inches of water to the rain and the foam. He was angry with himself for having slept and eaten; he taxed himself even with his weariness, and almost with the storm and the dark night. All seemed to him to have been his own fault.

These bitter self-reproaches filled his mind while engaged in his labor, but they did not prevent his considering well the work he was engaged in.

The leak had been found; that was the first step: to staunch it was the second. That was all that was possible for the moment. Joinery work cannot be carried on under water.

It was a favorable circumstance that the breach in the hull was in the space between the two chains which held the funnel fast on the starboard side. The stuffing with which it was necessary to stop it could be fixed to these chains.

The water meanwhile was gaining. Its depth was now between two and three feet; and it reached above his knees.

VI.

DE PROFUNDIS AD ALTUM.

GILLIATT had to his hand among his reserve of rigging for the sloop a pretty

large tarpaulin, furnished with long laniards at the four corners.

He took this tarpaulin, made fast the two corners by the laniards to the two rings of the chains of the funnel on the same side as the leak, and threw it over the gunwale. The tarpaulin hung like a sheet between the Little Douvre and the bark, and sunk in the water. The pressure of the water endeavoring to enter into the hold, kept it close to the hull upon the gap. The heavier the pressure the closer the sail adhered. It was stuck by the water itself right upon the fracture. The wound of the bark was staunched.

The tarred canvas formed an effectual barrier between the interior of the hold and the waves without. Not a drop of water entered. The leak was masked, but was not stopped. It was a respite only.

Gilliatt took the scoop and began to bale the sloop. It was time that she was lightened. The labor warmed him a little, but his weariness was extreme. He was forced to acknowledge to himself that he could not complete the work of staunching the hold. He had scarcely eaten anything, and he had the humiliation of feeling himself exhausted.

He measured the progress of his work by the sinking of the level of water below his knees. The fall was slow.

Moreover, the leakage was only interrupted: the evil was moderated, not repaired. The tarpaulin pushed into the gap began to bulge inside; looking as if a fist were under the canvas, endeavoring to force it through. The canvas, strong and pitchy, resisted; but the swelling and the tension increased; it was not certain that it would not give way, and at any moment the swelling might become a rent. The irruption of water must then recommence.

In such a case, as the crews of vessels in distress know well, there is no other remedy than stuffing. The sailors take rags of every kind which they can find at hand, everything, in fact, which in their language is called "service;" and with this they push the bulging sailcloth as far as they can into the leak.

Of this "service," Gilliatt had none. All the rags and tow which he had stored up had been used in his operations, or carried away by the storm.

If necessary, he might possibly have been able to find some remains by searching among the rocks. The sloop was sufficiently lightened for him to leave it with safety for a quarter of an hour; but how could he make this search without a light? The darkness was complete. There was no longer any moon; nothing but the starry sky. He had no dry tow with which to make a match, no tallow to make a candle, no fire to light one, no lantern to shelter it from the wind. In the sloop and among the rocks all was confused and indistinct. He could hear the water lapping against the wounded hull, but he could not even see the crack. It was with his hands that he had ascertained the bulging of the tarpaulin. In that darkness it was impossible to make any useful search for rags of canvas or pieces of tow scattered among the breakers. Who could glean these waifs and strays without being able to see his path? Gilliatt looked sorrowfully at the sky; all those stars, he thought, and yet no light!

The water in the bark having diminished, the pressure from without increased. The bulging of the canvas became larger, and was still increasing, like a frightful abscess ready to burst. The situation, which had been improved for a short time, began to be threatening.

Some means of stopping it effectually was absolutely necessary. He had nothing left but his clothes, which he had stretched to dry upon the projecting rocks of the Little Douvre.

He hastened to fetch them, and placed them upon the gunwale of the sloop.

Then he took his tarpaulin overcoat, and kneeling in the water, thrust it into the crevice, and pushing the swelling of the sail outward, emptied it of water. To the tarpaulin coat he added the sheepskin, then his Guernsey shirt, and then his jacket. The hole received them all. He had nothing left but his sailor's trousers, which he took off, and pushed

in with the other articles. This enlarged and strengthened the stuffing.

The stopper was made, and it appeared to be sufficient.

These clothes passed partly through the gap, the sail-cloth outside enveloping them. The sea making an effort to enter, pressed against the obstacle, spread it over the gap, and blocked it. It was a sort of exterior compression.

Inside, the centre only of the bulging having been driven out, there remained all around the gap and the stuffing just thrust through a sort of circular pad formed by the tarpaulin, which was rendered still firmer by the irregularities of the fracture with which it had become entangled.

The leak was staunched, but nothing could be more precarious. Those sharp splinters of the gap which fixed the tarpaulin might pierce it and make holes, by which the water would enter; while he would not even perceive it in the darkness. There was little probability of the stoppage lasting until daylight. Gilliatt's anxiety changed its form; but he felt it increasing at the same time that he found his strength leaving him.

He had again set to work to bale out the hold, but his arms, in spite of all his efforts, could scarcely lift a scoopful of water. He was naked and shivering. He felt as if the end were now at hand.

One possible chance flashed across his mind. There might be a sail in sight. A fishing-boat which should by any accident be in the neighborhood of the Douvres, might come to his assistance. The moment had arrived when a helpmate was absolutely necessary. With a man and a lantern all might yet be saved. If there were two persons, one might easily bale the vessel. Since the leak was temporarily staunched, as soon as she could be relieved of this burden, she would rise, and regain her ordinary water line. The leak would then be above the surface of the water, the repairs would be practicable, and he would be able immediately to replace the stuff by a piece of planking, and thus substitute for the temporary stoppage a complete repair. If not, it



THE SKELETON WAS PARTLY BURIED IN THIS HEAP.

Hugo, vol. IV., p. 172.

would be necessary to wait till daylight—to wait the whole night long; a delay which might prove ruinous. If by chance some ship's lantern should be in sight, Gilliatt would be able to signal it from the height of the Great Douvre. The weather was calm, there was no wind or rolling sea; there was a possibility of the figure of a man being observed moving against the background of the starry sky. A captain of a ship, or even the master of a fishing-boat, would not be at night in the waters of the Douvres without directing his glass upon the rock, by way of precaution.

Gilliatt hoped that some one might perceive him.

He climbed upon the wreck, grasped the knotted rope, and mounted upon the Great Douvre.

Not a sail was visible around the horizon; not a boat's lantern. The wide expanse, as far as eye could reach, was a desert. No assistance was possible, and no resistance possible.

Gilliatt felt himself without resources; a feeling which he had not felt until then.

A dark fatality was now his master. With all his labor, all his success, all his courage, he and his bark, and its precious burden, were about to become the sport of the waves. He had no other means of continuing the struggle; he became listless. How could he prevent the tide from returning, the water from rising, the night from continuing? The temporary stoppage which he had made was his sole reliance. He had exhausted and stripped himself in constructing and completing it; he could neither fortify nor add to it. The stoppage was such that it must remain as it was; and every further effort was useless. The apparatus, hastily constructed, was at the mercy of the waves. How would this inert obstacle work? It was this obstacle now, not Gilliatt, which had to sustain the combat, that handful of rags, not that intelligence. The swell of a wave would suffice to re-open the fracture. More or less of pressure; the whole question was comprised in that formula.

All depended upon a brute struggle between two mechanical quantities. Hence-

forth he could neither aid his auxiliary, nor stop his enemy. He was no longer any other than a mere spectator of this struggle, which was one for him of life or death. He who had ruled over it, a supreme intelligence, was at the last moment compelled to resign all to a mere blind resistance.

No trial, no terror that he had yet undergone, could bear comparison with this.

From the time when he had taken up his abode upon the Douvres, he had found himself environed, and as it were possessed by solitude. This solitude more than surrounded, it enveloped him. A thousand menaces at once had met him face to face. The wind was always there, ready to become furious; the sea, ready to roar. There was no stopping that terrible mouth the wind, no imprisoning that dread monster the sea. And yet he had striven, he, a solitary man, had combated hand to hand with the ocean, had wrestled even with the tempest.

Many other anxieties, many other necessities had he made head against. There was no form of distress with which he had not become familiar. He had been compelled to execute great works without tools, to move vast burdens without aid, without science to resolve problems, without provisions to find food, without bed or roof to cover it, to find shelter and sleep.

Upon that solitary rock he had been subjected by turns to all the varied and cruel tortures of nature; oftentimes a gentle mother, not less often a pitiless destroyer.

He had conquered his isolation, conquered hunger, conquered thirst, conquered cold, conquered fever, conquered labor, conquered sleep. He had encountered a mighty coalition of obstacles formed to bar his progress. After his privations there were the elements; after the sea the tempest, after the tempest the devil-fish, after the monster the spectre.

A dismal irony was then the end of all. Upon this rock, whence he had thought to arise triumphant, the spectre of Clubin had only arisen to mock him with a hideous smile.

The grin of the spectre was well founded. Gilliatt saw himself ruined ; saw himself no less than Clubin in the grasp of death.

Winter, famine, fatigue, the dismemberment of the wreck, the removal of the machinery, the equinoctial gale, the thunder, the monster, were all as nothing compared with this small fracture in a vessel's planks. Against the cold one could procure—and he had procured—fire ; against hunger, the shellfish of the rocks ; against thirst, the rain ; against the difficulties of his great task, industry and energy ; against the sea and the storm, the breakwater ; against the devilfish, the knife ; but against the terrible leak he had no weapon.

The hurricane had bequeathed him this sinister farewell. The last struggle, the traitorous thrust, the treacherous side blow of the vanquished foe. In its flight the tempest had turned and shot this arrow in the rear. It was the final and deadly stab of his antagonist.

It was possible to combat with the tempest, but how could he struggle with that insidious enemy who now attacked him.

If the stoppage gave way, if the leak reopened, nothing could prevent the sloop foundering. It would be the bursting of the ligature of the artery ; and once under the water with its heavy burden, no power could raise it. The noble struggle, with two months' Titanic labor, ended then in annihilation. To recommence would be impossible. He had neither forge nor materials. At daylight, in all probability, he was about to see all his work sink slowly and irrecoverably into the gulf. Terrible, to feel that sombre power beneath. The sea snatched his prize from his hands.

With his bark engulfed, no fate awaited him but to perish of hunger and cold, like the poor shipwrecked sailor on "The Man" rock.

During two long months the intelligences which hover invisibly over the world had been the spectators of these things ; on one hand the wide expanse, the waves, the winds, the lightnings, the meteors ; on the other a man. On one hand the sea, on the other a human mind ; on the one hand the infinite, on the other an atom.

The battle had been fierce, and behold the abortive issue of those prodigies of valor.

Thus did this heroism without parallel end in powerlessness ; thus ended in despair that formidable struggle ; that struggle of a nothing against all ; that Iliad against one.

Gilliatt gazed wildly into space.

He had no clothing. He stood naked in the midst of that immensity.

Then overwhelmed by the sense of that unknown infinity, like one bewildered by a strange persecution, confronting the shadows of night, in the presence of that impenetrable darkness, in the midst of the murmur of the waves, the swell, the foam, the breeze, under the clouds, under that vast diffusion of force, under that mysterious firmament of wings, of stars, of gulfs, having around him and beneath him the ocean, above him the constellations, under the great unfathomable deep, he sank, gave up the struggle, lay down upon the rock, his face towards the stars, humbled, and uplifting his joined hands towards the terrible depths, he cried aloud, "Have mercy."

Weighed down to earth by that immensity, he prayed.

He was there alone, in the darkness upon the rock, in the midst of that sea, stricken down with exhaustion like one smitten by lightning, naked like the gladiator in the circus, save that for circus he had the vast horizon, instead of wild beasts the shadows of darkness, instead of the faces of the crowd the eyes of the Unknown, instead of the Vestals the stars, instead of Cæsar the All-powerful.

His whole being seemed to dissolve in cold, fatigue, powerlessness, prayer, and darkness, and his eyes closed.

VII.

THE APPEAL IS HEARD.

SOME hours passed.

The sun rose in an unclouded sky.

Its first ray shone upon a motionless form upon the Great Douvre. It was Gilliatt.

He was still outstretched upon the rock.

He was naked, cold, and stiff; but he did not shiver. His closed eyelids were wan. It would have been difficult for a beholder to say whether the form before him was not a corpse.

The sun seemed to look upon him.

If he were not dead, he was already so near death that the slightest cold wind would have sufficed to extinguish life.

The wind began to breathe, warm and animating; it was the opening breath of May.

Meanwhile the sun ascended in the deep blue sky; its rays, less horizontal, flushed the sky. Its light became warmth. It enveloped the slumbering form.

Gilliatt moved not. If he breathed, it was only that feeble respiration which could scarcely tarnish the surface of a mirror.

The sun continued its ascent; its rays striking less and less obliquely upon the naked man. The gentle breeze which had been merely tepid became hot.

The rigid and naked body remained still without movement; but the skin seemed less livid.

The sun, approaching the zenith, shone almost perpendicularly upon the plateau of the Douvres. A flood of light descended from the heavens; the vast reflection from the glassy sea increased its splendor: the rock itself imbibed the rays and warmed the sleeper.

A sigh raised his breast.

He lived.

The sun continued its gentle offices. The wind, which was already the breath of summer and of noon, approached him like loving lips that breathed upon him softly.

Gilliatt moved.

The peaceful calm upon the sea was perfect. Its murmur was like the droning of the nurse beside the sleeping infant. The rock seemed cradled in the waves.

The sea-birds, who knew that form, fluttered above it; not with their old wild astonishment, but with a sort of fraternal tenderness. They uttered plaintive cries: they seemed to be calling to him. A sea-

mew, who no doubt knew him, was tame enough to come near him. It began to caw as if speaking to him. The sleeper seemed not to hear. The bird hopped upon his shoulder, and pecked his lips softly.

Gilliatt opened his eyes.

The birds dispersed, chattering wildly.

Gilliatt arose, stretched himself like a roused lion, ran to the edge of the platform, and looked down into the space between the two Douvres.

The sloop was there, intact; the stoppage had held out; the sea had probably disturbed it but little.

All was saved.

He was no longer weary. His powers had returned. His swoon had ended in a deep sleep.

He descended and baled out the sloop, emptied the hold, raised the leakage above the water-line, dressed himself, eat, drank some water, and was joyful.

The gap in the side of his vessel, examined in broad daylight, proved to require more labor than he had thought. It was a serious fracture. The entire day was not too much for its repair.

At daybreak on the morrow, after removing the barrier and re-opening the entrance to the defile, dressed in the tattered clothing which had served to stop the leak, having about him Clubin's girdle and the seventy-five thousand francs, standing erect in the sloop, now repaired, by the side of the machinery which he had rescued, with a favorable breeze and a good sea, Gilliatt pushed off from the Douvres.

He put the sloop's head for Guernsey.

At the moment of his departure from the rocks, any one who had been there might have heard him singing, in an under-tone, the air of "Bonnie Dundee."

THIRD PART.

BOOK I.

NIGHT AND THE MOON.

I.

THE HARBOR CLOCK.

THE St. Sampson of the present day is almost a city; the St. Sampson of forty years since was almost a village.

When the winter evenings were ended and spring had come, the inhabitants were not long out of bed after sundown. St. Sampson was an ancient parish which had long been accustomed to the sound of the curfew-bell, and which had a traditional habit of blowing out the candle at an early hour. Those old Norman villages are famous for early roosting and the villagers are generally great rearers of poultry.

The people of St. Sampson, except a few rich families among the townfolk, are also a population of quarriers and carpenters. The port is a port of ship repairing. The quarrying of stone and the fashioning of timber go on all day long; here the laborer with the pickaxe, there the workman with the mallet. At night they sink with fatigue, and sleep like lead. Rude labors bring heavy slumbers.

One evening, in the commencement of the month of May, after watching the crescent moon for some instants through the trees, and listening to the step of Déruchette walking alone in the cool air in the garden of the Bravées, Mess Lethierry had returned to his room looking on the harbor, and had retired to rest; Douce and Grace were already a-bed. Except Déruchette, the whole household were sleeping. Doors and shutters were everywhere closed. Footsteps were silent in the streets. Some few lights, like winking eyes about to close in rest, showed here and there in windows in the roofs, indicating the hour of domestics going to bed. Nine had already struck in the old Romanesque belfry, surrounded by ivy,

which shares with the church of St. Bré-lade at Jersey the peculiarity of having for its date four ones (IIII), which are used to signify eleven hundred and eleven.

The popularity of Mess Lethierry at St. Sampson had been founded on his success. The success at an end, there had come a void. It might be imagined that ill-fortune is contagious, and that the unsuccessful have a plague, so rapidly are they put in quarantine. The young men of well-to-do families avoided Déruchette. The isolation around the Bravées was so complete, that its inmates had not even yet heard the news of the great local event which had that day set all St. Sampson in a ferment. The rector of the parish, the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray, had become rich. His uncle, the magnificent Dean of St. Asaph, had just died in London. The news had been brought by the mail sloop, the Cashmere, arrived from England that very morning, and the mast of which could be perceived in the roads of St. Peter's Port. The Cashmere was to depart for Southampton at noon on the morrow, and, so the rumor ran, to convey the reverend gentleman, who had been suddenly summoned to England, to be present at the official opening of the will, not to speak of other urgent matters connected with an important inheritance. All day long St. Sampson had been conversing on this subject. The Cashmere, the Rev. Ebenezer, his deceased uncle, his riches, his departure, his possible preferment in the future, had formed the foundations of that perpetual buzzing. A solitary house, still uninformed on these matters, had remained at peace. This was the Bravées.

Mess Lethierry had jumped into his hammock, and lay down in his clothing.

Since the catastrophe of the Durande, to get into his hammock had been his resource. Every captive has recourse to stretching himself upon his pallet, and Mess Lethierry was the captive of his grief. To go to bed was a truce, a gain in breathing time, a suspension of ideas. He neither slept nor watched. Strictly speaking, for two months and a half—for so long was it since his misfortune—Mess Lethierry had

been in a sort of somnambulism. He had not yet regained possession of his faculties. He was in that cloudy and confused condition of intellect with which those are familiar who have undergone overwhelming afflictions. His reflections were not thought, his sleep was no repose. By day he was not awake, by night not asleep. He was up, and then gone to rest, that was all. When he was in his hammock forgetfulness came to him a little. He called that sleeping. Chimeras floated about him, and within him. The nocturnal cloud, full of confused faces, traversed his brain. Sometimes it was the Emperor Napoleon dictating to him the story of his life; sometimes there were several *Déruchettes*; strange birds were in the trees; the streets of Lons-le-Saulnier became serpents. Nightmares were the brief respites of despair. He passed his nights in dreaming, and his days in reverie.

Sometimes he remained all the afternoon at the window of his room, which looked out upon the port, with his head drooping, his elbows on the stone, his ears resting on his fists, his back turned to the whole world, his eye fixed on the old massive iron ring fastened in the wall of the house, at only a few feet from his window, where in the old days he used to moor the *Durande*. He was looking at the rust which gathered on the ring.

He was reduced to the mere mechanical habit of living.

The bravest men, when deprived of their most cherished idea, will come to this. His life had become a void. Life is a voyage; the idea is the itinerary. The plan of their course gone, they stop. The object is lost, the strength of purpose gone. Fate has a secret discretionary power. It is able to touch with its rod even our moral being. Despair is almost the destitution of the soul. Only the greatest minds resist, and for what?

Mess Lethierry was always meditating, if absorption can be called meditation, in the depth of a sort of cloudy abyss. Broken words sometimes escaped him like these, "There is nothing left for me now, but to ask yonder for leave to go."

There was a certain contradiction in that nature, complex as the sea, of which Mess Lethierry was, so to speak, the product. Mess Lethierry's grief did not seek relief in prayer.

To be powerless is a certain strength. In the presence of our two great expressions of this blindness—destiny and nature—it is in his powerlessness that man has found his chief support in prayer.

Man seeks succor from his terror; his anxiety bids him kneel.

But Mess Lethierry prayed not.

In the time when he was happy, God existed for him almost in visible contact. Lethierry addressed Him, pledged his word to Him, seemed at times to hold familiar intercourse with Him. But in the hour of his misfortune, a phenomenon not unfrequent—the idea of God had become eclipsed in his mind. This happens when the mind has created for itself a deity clothed with human qualities.

In the state of mind in which he existed, there was for Lethierry only one clear vision—the smile of *Déruchette*. Beyond this all was dark.

For some time, apparently on account of the loss of the *Durande*, and of the blow which it had been to them, this pleasant smile had been rare. She seemed always thoughtful. Her birdlike playfulness, her childlike ways, were gone. She was never seen now in the morning, at the sound of the cannon which announced daybreak, saluting the rising sun with "Boom! Daylight! Come in, please!" At times her expression was very serious, a sad thing for that sweet nature. She made an effort, however, sometimes to laugh before Mess Lethierry and to divert him; but her cheerfulness grew tarnished from day to day—gathered dust like the wing of a butterfly with a pin through its body. Whether through sorrow for her uncle's sorrow—for there are griefs which are the reflections of other griefs—or whether for any other reasons, she appeared at this time to be much inclined towards religion. In the time of the old rector, M. Jaquemin Hérode, she scarcely went to church, as has been already said, four times a year. Now she was, on the

contrary, assiduous in her attendance. She missed no service, neither of Sunday or of Thursday. Pious souls in the parish remarked with satisfaction that amendment. For it is a great blessing when a girl who runs so many dangers in the world turns her thoughts towards God. That enables the poor parents at least to be easy on the subject of love-making and what not.

In the evening, whenever the weather permitted, she walked for an hour or two in the garden of the Bravées. She was almost as pensive there as Mess Lethierry, and almost always alone. Déruchette went to bed last. This, however, did not prevent Douce and Grace watching her a little, by that instinct for spying which is common to servants; spying is such a relaxation after household work.

As to Mess Lethierry, in the abstracted state of his mind, these little changes in Déruchette's habits escaped him. Moreover, his nature had little in common with the Duenna. He had not even remarked her regularity at the church. Tenacious of his prejudices against the clergy and their sermons, he would have seen with little pleasure these frequent attendances at the parish church. It was not because his own moral condition was not undergoing change. Sorrow is a cloud which changes form.

Robust natures, as we have said, are sometimes almost overthrown by sudden great misfortunes; but not quite. Manly characters such as Lethierry's experience a reaction in a given time. Despair has its backward stages. From overwhelming to rise to dejection; from dejection to affliction; from affliction to melancholy. Melancholy is a twilight state; suffering melts into it and becomes a sombre joy. Melancholy is the pleasure of being sad.

These elegiac moods were not made for Lethierry. Neither the nature of his temperament nor the character of his misfortune suited those delicate shades. But at the moment at which we have returned to him, the reverie of his first despair had for more than a week been tending to disperse; without, however, leaving him less sad. He was more inactive, was always

dull; but he was no longer overwhelmed. A certain perception of events and circumstances was returning to him, and he began to experience something of that phenomenon which may be called the return to reality.

Thus by day in the great lower room, he did not listen to the words of those about him, but he heard them. Grace came one morning quite triumphant, to tell Déruchette that he had undone the cover of a newspaper.

This half acceptance of realities is in itself a good symptom, a token of convalescence. Great afflictions produce a stupor; it is by such little acts that men return to themselves. This improvement, however, is at first only an aggravation of the evil. The dreamy condition of mind in which the sufferer has lived, has served, while it lasted, to blunt his grief. His sight before was thick. He felt little. Now his view is clear, nothing escapes him; and his wounds re-open. Each detail that he perceives serves to remind him of his sorrow. He sees everything again in memory, every remembrance is a regret. All kinds of bitter aftertastes lurk in that return to life. He is better, and yet worse. Such was the condition of Lethierry. In returning to full consciousness, his sufferings had become more distinct.

A sudden shock first recalled him to a sense of reality.

One afternoon, between the 15th and 20th of April, a double-knock at the door of the great lower room of the Bravées had signalled the arrival of the postman. Douce had opened the door; there was a letter. The letter came from beyond sea; it was addressed to Mess Lethierry, and bore the postmark "Lisbon."

Douce had taken the letter to Mess Lethierry, who was in his room. He had taken it, placed it mechanically upon the table, and had not looked at it.

The letter remained an entire week upon the table without being unsealed.

It happened, however, one morning that Douce said to Mess Lethierry:

"Shall I brush the dust off your letter, sir?"

Lethierry seemed to arouse from his lethargy.

"Ay, ay! You are right," he said; and he opened the letter, and read as follows:

"At Sea, 10th March.

"To Mess Lethierry of St. Sampson.

"You will be gratified to receive news of me. I am aboard the Tamaulipas, bound for the port of 'No return.' Among the crew is a sailor named Ahier-Tostevin, from Guernsey, who will return and will have some facts to communicate to you. I take the opportunity of our speaking a vessel, the Herman Cortes, bound for Lisbon, to forward you this letter.

"You will be astonished to learn that I am going to be honest.

"As honest as Sieur Clubin.

"I am bound to believe that you know of certain recent occurrences; nevertheless, it is, perhaps, not altogether superfluous to send you a full account of them.

"To proceed then.

"I have returned you your money.

"Some years ago, I borrowed from you, under somewhat irregular circumstances, the sum of fifty thousand francs. Before leaving St. Malo lately, I placed in the hands of your confidential man of business, Sieur Clubin, on your account, three bank-notes of one thousand pounds each; making together seventy-five thousand francs. You will no doubt find this reimbursement sufficient.

"Sieur Clubin acted for you, and received your money, including interest, in a remarkably energetic manner. He appeared to me, indeed, singularly zealous. This is, in fact, my reason for apprising you of the facts.

"Your other confidential man of business,

"RANTAINÉ.

"*Postscript*—Sieur Clubin was in possession of a revolver, which will explain to you the circumstance of my having no receipt."

He who has ever touched a torpedo, or a Leyden-jar fully charged, may have a notion of the effect produced on Mess Lethierry by the reading of this letter.

Under that envelope, in that sheet of paper folded in four, to which he had at first paid so little attention, lay the elements of an extraordinary commotion.

He recognized the writing and the signature. As to the facts which the letter contained, at first he understood nothing.

The excitement of the event, however, soon gave movement to his faculties.

The effective part of the shock he had received lay in the phenomenon of the seventy-five thousand francs entrusted by Rantaine to Clubin; this was a fiddle which compelled Lethierry's brain to work.

Conjecture is a healthy occupation for the mind. Reason is awakened: logic is called into play.

For some time past public opinion in Guernsey had been undergoing a reaction on the subject of Clubin: that man of such high reputation for honor during many years; that man so unanimously regarded with esteem. People had begun to question and to doubt; there were wagers pro and con. Some light had been thrown on the question in singular ways. The figure of Clubin began to become clearer, that is to say, he began to be blacker in the eyes of the world.

A judiciary inquiry had taken place at St. Malo, for the purpose of ascertaining what had become of the coastguard-man, number 619. Legal perspicacity had got upon a false scent, a thing which happens not unfrequently. It had started with the hypothesis that the man had been enticed by Zuela, and shipped aboard the Tamaulipas for Chili. This ingenious supposition had led to a considerable amount of wasted conjecture. The shortsightedness of justice had failed to take note of Rantaine; but in the progress of inquiry the authorities had come upon other clues. The affair, so obscure, became complicated. Clubin had become mixed up with the enigma. A coincidence, perhaps a direct connection, had been found between the departure of the Tamaulipas and the loss of the Durande. At the wine-shop near the Dinan Gate, where Clubin thought himself entirely unknown, he had been recognized. The wine-shop keeper had talked; Clubin had bought a bottle of brandy that night. For whom? The gunsmith of St. Vincent Street, too, had talked. Clubin had purchased a revolver. For what object? The landlord of the "Jean Auberge" had talked. Clubin had absented himself in an inexplicable manner. Captain Gertrai-Gaboureau had talked; Clubin had determined to start, although warned, and knowing that he might expect a great fog. The crew of the Durande had talked. In fact, the collection of the freight had been neglected, and the stowage badly arranged, a negligence easy to comprehend, if the captain had

determined to wreck the ship. The Guernsey passenger, too, had spoken. Clubin had evidently imagined that he had run upon the Hanways. The Torteval people had spoken. Clubin had visited that neighborhood a few days before the loss of the *Durande*, and had been seen walking in the direction of Pleinmont, near the Hanways. He had with him a travelling-bag. "He had set out with it, and come back without it." The birds'-nesters had spoken: their story seemed to be possibly connected with Clubin's disappearance; if instead of ghosts they supposed smugglers. Finally, the haunted house of Pleinmont itself had spoken. Persons who had determined to get information, had climbed and entered the windows, and had found inside—what? The very travelling-bag which had been seen in *Sieur Clubin's* possession. The authorities of the *Douzaine* of Torteval had taken possession of the bag and had it opened. It was found to contain provisions, a telescope, a chronometer, a man's clothing, and linen marked with Clubin's initials. All this in the gossip of St. Malo and Guernsey became more and more like a case of fraud. Obscure hints were brought together; there appeared to have been a singular disregard of advice; a willingness to encounter the dangers of the fog; a suspected negligence in the stowage of the cargo. Then there was the mysterious bottle of brandy; a drunken helmsman; a substitution of the captain for the helmsman; a management of the rudder, to say the least, unskilful. The heroism of remaining behind upon the wreck began to look like roguery. Clubin besides had evidently been deceived as to the rock he was on. Granted an intention to wreck the vessel, it was easy to understand the choice of the Hanways, the shore easily reached by swimming, and the intended concealment in the haunted house awaiting the opportunity for flight. The travelling-bag, that suspicious preparative, completed the demonstration. By what link this affair connected itself with the other affair of the disappearance of the coast-guard-man nobody knew. People imagined some connection, and that was all. They

had a glimpse in their minds of the look-out man, number 619, alongside of the mysterious Clubin—quite a tragic drama. Clubin possibly was not an actor in it, but his presence was visible in the side scenes.

The supposition of a wilful destruction of the *Durande* did not explain everything. There was a revolver in the story, with no part yet assigned to it. The revolver, probably, belonged to the other affair.

The scent of the public is keen and true. Its instinct excels in those discoveries of truth by pieces and fragments. Still, amidst these facts, which seemed to point pretty clearly to a case of barratry, there were serious difficulties.

Everything was consistent; everything coherent; but a basis was wanting.

People do not wreck vessels for the pleasure of wrecking them. Men do not run all those risks of fog, rocks, swimming, concealment, and flight without an interest. What could have been Clubin's interest?

The act seemed plain, but the motive was puzzling.

Hence a doubt in many minds. Where there is no motive, it is natural to infer that there was no act.

The missing link was important. The letter from Rantaine seemed to supply it.

This letter furnished a motive for Clubin's supposed crime: seventy-five thousand francs to be appropriated.

Rantaine was the *Deus ex machina*. He had descended from the clouds with a lantern in his hand. His letter was the final light upon the affair. It explained everything, and even promised a witness in the person of Ahier-Tostevin.

The part which it at once suggested for the revolver was decisive. Rantaine was undoubtedly well informed. His letter pointed clearly the explanation of the mystery.

There could be no possible palliation of Clubin's crime. He had premeditated the shipwreck; the proofs were the preparations discovered in the haunted house. Even supposing him innocent, and admitting the wreck to have been accidental, would he not, at the last moment, when he had determined to sacrifice himself

with the vessel, have entrusted the seventy-five thousand francs to the men who escaped in the longboat. The evidence was strikingly complete. Now what had become of Clubin? He had probably been the victim of his blunder. He had doubtless perished upon the Douvres.

All this construction of surmises, which were not far from the reality, had for several days occupied the mind of Mess Lethierry. The letter from Rantaine had done him the service of setting him to think. He was at first shaken by his surprise; then he made an effort to reflect. He made another effort more difficult still, that of inquiry. He was induced to listen and even seek conversation. At the end of a week, he had become, to a certain degree, in the world again; his thoughts had regained their coherence, and he was almost restored. He had emerged from his confused and troubled state.

Rantaine's letter, even admitting that Mess Lethierry could ever have entertained any hope of the reimbursement of his money, destroyed that last chance.

It added to the catastrophe of the Durande this new wreck of seventy-five thousand francs. It put him in possession of that amount just so far as to make him sensible of its loss. The letter revealed to him the extreme point in his ruin.

Hence he experienced a new and very painful sensation, which we have already spoken of. He began to take an interest in his household—what it was to be in the future—how he was to set things in order; matters of which he had taken no heed for two months past. These trifling cares wounded him with a thousand tiny points, worse in their aggregate than the old despair. A sorrow is doubly burdensome which has to be endured in each item, and while disputing inch by inch with fate for ground already lost. Ruin is endurable in the mass, but not in the dust and fragments of the fallen edifice. The great fact may overwhelm, but the details torture. The catastrophe which lately fell like a thunderbolt, becomes now a cruel persecution. Humiliation comes to aggravate the blow. A second desolation

succeeds the first, with features more repulsive. You descend one degree nearer to annihilation. The winding-sheet becomes changed to sordid rags.

No thought is more bitter than that of one's own gradual fall from a social position.

Ruin is simple enough. A violent shock; a cruel turn of fate; a catastrophe once for all. Be it so. We submit, and all is over. You are ruined: it is well; you are dead? No; you are still living. On the morrow you know it well. By what? By the pricking of a pin. Yonder passer-by omits to recognize you; the tradesmen's bills rain down upon you; and yonder is one of your enemies, who is smiling. Perhaps he is thinking of Arnal's last pun; but it is all the same. The pun would not have appeared to him so inimitable but for your ruin. You read your own sudden insignificance even in looks of indifference. Friends who used to dine at your table become of opinion that three courses were an extravagance. Your faults are patent to the eyes of everybody; ingratitude having nothing more to expect, proclaims itself openly; every idiot has foreseen your misfortunes. The malignant pull you to pieces; the more malignant profess to pity. And then come a hundred paltry details. Nausea succeeds to grief. You have been wont to indulge in wine; you must now drink cider. Two servants, too! Why, one will be too many. It will be necessary to discharge this one, and get rid of that. Flowers in your garden are superfluous; you will plant it with potatoes. You used to make presents of your fruits to friends; you will send them henceforth to market. As to the poor, it will be absurd to think of giving anything to them. Are you not poor yourself? And then there is the painful question of dress. To have to refuse a wife a new ribbon, what a torture! To have to refuse one who has made you a gift of her beauty a trifling article; to haggle over such matters, like a miser! Perhaps she will say to you, "What! rob my garden of its flowers, and now refuse one for my bonnet!" Ah me! to have to condemn her

to shabby dresses. The family table is silent. You fancy that those around it think harshly of you. Beloved faces have become clouded. This is what is meant by falling fortunes. It is to die day by day. To be struck down is like the blast of the furnace; to decay like this is the torture of the slow fire.

An overwhelming blow is a sort of Waterloo, a slow decay, a St. Helena. Destiny, incarnate in the form of Wellington, has still some dignity; but how sordid in the shape of Hudson Lowe. Fate becomes then a paltry huckster. We find the man of Campo Formio quarrelling about a pair of stockings; we see that dwarfing of Napoleon which makes England less. Waterloo and St. Helena! Reduced to humbler proportions, every ruined man has traversed those two phases.

On the evening we have mentioned, and which was one of the first evenings in May, Lethierry, leaving Déruchette to walk by moonlight in the garden, had gone to bed more depressed than ever.

All these mean and repulsive details, peculiar to worldly misfortune; all these trifling cares, which are at first insipid, and afterwards harassing, were revolving in his mind. A sullen load of miseries! Mess Lethierry felt that his fall was irremediable. What could he do? What would become of them? What sacrifices should he be compelled to impose on Déruchette? Whom should he discharge—Douce or Grace? Would they have to sell the Bravées? Would they not be compelled to leave the island? To be nothing where he had been everything; it was a terrible fall indeed.

And to know that the old times had gone for ever! To recall those journeys to and fro, uniting France with those numberless islands; the Tuesday's departure, the Friday's return, the crowd on the quay, those great cargoes, that industry, that prosperity, that proud direct navigation, that machinery embodying the will of man, that all-powerful boiler, that smoke, all that reality! The steamboat had been the final crown of the compass; the needle indicating the direct track, the steam-vessel following it. One proposing,

the other executing. Where was she now, his Durande, that mistress of the seas, that queen who had made him a king? To have been so long the man of ideas in his own country, the man of success, the man who revolutionized navigation; and then to have to give up all, to abdicate! To cease to exist, to become a bye-word, an empty bag which once was full. To belong to the past, after having so long represented the future. To come down to be an object of pity to fools, to witness the triumph of routine, obstinacy, conservatism, selfishness, ignorance. To see the old barbarous sailing cutters crawling to and fro upon the sea: the outworn old-world prejudices young again; to have wasted a whole life; to have been a light, and to suffer this eclipse. Ah! what a sight it was upon the waves, that noble funnel, that prodigious cylinder, that pillar with its capital of smoke, that column grander than any in the Place Vendôme, for on that there was only a man, while on this stood Progress. The ocean was subdued; it was certainty upon the open sea. And had all this been witnessed in that little island, in that little harbor, in that little town of St. Sampson? Yes; it had been witnessed. And could it be, that having seen it, all had vanished to be seen no more.

All this series of regrets tortured Lethierry. There is such a thing as a mental sobbing. Never, perhaps, had he felt his misfortune more bitterly. A certain numbness follows this acute suffering. Under the weight of his sorrow he gradually dosed.

For about two hours he remained in this state, feverish, sleeping a little, meditating much. Such torpors are accompanied by an obscure labor of the brain, which is inexpressibly wearying. Towards the middle of the night, about midnight, a little before or a little after, he shook off his lethargy. He aroused, and opened his eyes. His window was directly in front of his hammock. He saw something extraordinary.

A form was before the window; a marvellous form. It was the funnel of a steam-vessel.

Mess Lethierry started, and sat upright in his bed. The hammock oscillated like a swing in a tempest. Lethierry stared. A vision filled the window-frame. There was the harbor flooded with the light of the moon, and against that glitter, quite close to his house, stood forth, tall, round, and black, a magnificent object.

The funnel of a steam-vessel was there.

Lethierry sprang out of his hammock, ran to the window, lifted the sash, leaned out, and recognized it.

The funnel of the *Durande* stood before him. It was in the old place.

Its four chains supported it, made fast to the bulwarks of a vessel in which, beneath the funnel, he could distinguish a dark mass of irregular outline.

Lethierry recoiled, turned his back to the window, and dropped in a sitting posture into his hammock again.

Then he returned, and once more he saw the vision.

An instant afterwards, or in about the time occupied by a flash of lightning, he was out upon the quay, with a lantern in his hand.

A bark carrying a little backward a massive block from which issued the straight funnel before the window of the *Bravées*, was made fast to the mooring-ring of the *Durande*. The bows of the bark stretched beyond the corner of the wall of the house, and were level with the quay.

There was no one aboard.

The vessel was of a peculiar shape. All Guernsey would have recognized it. It was the old Dutch sloop.

Lethierry jumped aboard; and ran forward to the block which he saw beyond the mast.

It was there, entire, complete, intact, standing square and firm upon its cast-iron flooring; the boiler had all its rivets, the axle of the paddle-wheels was raised erect, and made fast near the boiler; the brine-pump was in its place; nothing was wanting.

Lethierry examined the machinery.

The lantern and the moon helped him in his examination. He went over every part of the mechanism.

He noticed the two cases at the sides. He examined the axle of the wheels.

He went into the little cabin; it was empty.

He returned to the engine, and felt it, looked into the boiler, and knelt down to examine it inside.

He placed his lantern within the furnace, where the light, illuminating all the machinery, produced almost the illusion of an engine-room with its fire.

Then he burst into a wild laugh, sprang to his feet, and with his eye fixed on the engine, and his arms outstretched towards the funnel, he cried aloud, "Help."

The harbor-bell was upon the quay, at a few paces distance. He ran to it, seized the chain, and began to pull it violently.

II.

THE HARBOR BELL AGAIN.

GILLIATT, in fact, after a passage without accident, but somewhat slow on account of the heavy burden of the sloop, had arrived at St. Sampson after dark, and nearer ten than nine o'clock.

He had calculated the time. The half-flood had arrived. There was plenty of water, and the moon was shining; so that he was able to enter the port.

The little harbor was silent. A few vessels were moored there, with their sails brailed up to the yards, their tops over, and without lanterns. At the far end a few others were visible, high and dry in the carenage, where they were undergoing repairs; large hulls dismasted and stripped, with their planking open at various parts, lifting high the ends of their timbers, and looking like huge dead beetles lying on their backs with their legs in the air.

As soon as he had cleared the harbor mouth, Gilliatt examined the port and the quay. There was no light to be seen either at the *Bravées* or elsewhere. The place was deserted, save, perhaps, by some one going to or returning from the parsonage-house; nor was it possible to be sure even of this; for the night blurred every outline, and the moonlight always gives

to objects a vague appearance. The distance added to the indistinctness. The parsonage-house at that period was situated on the other side of the harbor, where there stands at the present day an open mast-house.

Gilliatt had approached the Bravées quietly, and had made the sloop fast to the ring of the Durande, under Mess Lethierry's window.

He leaped over the bulwarks, and was ashore.

Leaving the sloop behind him by the quay, he turned the angle of the house, passed along a little narrow street, then along another, did not even notice the pathway which branched off leading to the *Bû de la Rue*, and in a few minutes found himself at that corner of the wall where there were wild mallows with pink flowers in June, with holly, ivy, and nettles. Many a time concealed behind the bushes, seated on a stone, in the summer days, he had watched here through long hours, even for whole months, often tempted to climb the wall, over which he contemplated the garden of the Bravées and the two windows of a little room seen through the branches of the trees. The stone was there still; the bushes, the low wall, the angle, as quiet and dark as ever. Like an animal returning to its hole, gliding rather than walking, he made his way in. Once seated there, he made no movement. He looked around; saw again the garden, the pathways, the beds of flowers, the house, the two windows of the chamber. The moonlight fell upon this dream. He felt it horrible to be compelled to breathe, and did what he could to prevent it.

He seemed to be gazing on a vision of paradise, and was afraid that all would vanish. It was almost impossible that all these things could be really before his eyes; and if they were, it could only be with that imminent danger of melting into air which belongs to things divine. A breath, and all must be dissipated. He trembled with the thought.

Before him, not far off, at the side of one of the alleys in the garden, was a wooden seat painted green. The reader will remember this seat.

Gilliatt looked up at the two windows. He thought of the slumber of some one possibly in that room. Behind that wall she was no doubt sleeping. He wished himself elsewhere, yet would sooner have died than go away. He thought of a gentle breathing moving a woman's breast. It was she, that vision, that purity in the clouds, that form haunting him by day and night. She was there! He thought of her so far removed, and yet so near as to be almost within reach of his delight; he thought of that impossible ideal drooping in slumber, and like himself, too, visited by visions; of that being so long desired, so distant, so impalpable—her closed eyelids, her face resting on her hand; of the mystery of sleep in its relations with that pure spirit, of what dreams might come to one who was herself a dream. He dared not think beyond, and yet he did. He ventured on those familiarities which the fancy may indulge in; the notion of how much was feminine in that angelic being disturbed his thoughts. The darkness of night emboldens timid imaginations to take these furtive glances. He was vexed within himself, feeling on reflection as if it were profanity to think of her so boldly; yet still constrained, in spite of himself, he tremblingly gazed into the invisible. He shuddered almost with a sense of pain as he imagined her room, a petticoat on a chair, a mantle fallen on the carpet, a band unbuckled, a handkerchief. He imagined her corset with its lace hanging to the ground, her stocking, her boots. His soul was among the stars.

The stars are made for the human heart of a poor man like Gilliatt not less than for that of the rich and great. There is a certain degree of passion by which every man becomes wrapped in a celestial light. With a rough and primitive nature, this truth is even more applicable. An uncultivated mind is easily touched with dreams.

Delight is a fulness which overflows like any other. To see those windows was almost too much happiness for Gilliatt.

Suddenly, he looked and saw her.

From the branches of a clump of

bushes, already thickened by the spring; there issued with a spectral slowness a celestial figure, a dress, a divine face, almost a shining light beneath the moon.

Gilliatt felt his powers failing him: it was *Déruchette*.

Déruchette approached. She stopped. She walked back a few paces, stopped again: then returned and sat upon the wooden bench. The moon was in the trees, a few clouds floated among the pale stars; the sea murmured to the shadows in an under-tone, the town was sleeping; a thin haze was rising from the horizon, the melancholy was profound. *Déruchette* inclined her head, with those thoughtful eyes which look attentive yet see nothing. She was seated sideways, and had nothing on her head but a little cap untied, which showed upon her delicate neck the commencement of her hair. She twirled mechanically a ribbon of her cap around one of her fingers; the half light showed the outline of her hands like those of a statue; her dress was of one of those shades which by night looked white: the trees stirred as if they felt the enchantment which she shed around her. The tip of one of her feet was visible. Her lowered eyelids had that vague contraction which suggests a tear checked in its course, or a thought suppressed. There was a charming indecision in the movements of her arms, which had no support to lean on; a sort of floating mingled with every posture. It was rather a gleam than a light—rather a grace than a goddess; the folds of her dress were exquisite; her face, which might inspire adoration, seemed meditative, like portraits of the Virgin. It was terrible to think how near she was: Gilliatt could hear her breathe.

A nightingale was singing in the distance. The stirring of the wind among the branches set in movement the inexpressible silence of the night. *Déruchette*, beautiful, divine, appeared in the twilight like a creation from those rays and from the perfumes in the air. That wide-spread enchantment seemed to concentrate and embody itself mysteriously in her; she became its living manifestation. She

seemed the out-blossoming of all that shadow and silence.

But the shadow and silence which floated lightly about her weighed heavily on Gilliatt. He was bewildered; what he experienced is not to be told in words. Emotion is always new, and the word is always enough. Hence the impossibility of expressing it. Joy is sometimes overwhelming. To see *Déruchette*, to see her herself, to see her dress, her cap, her ribbon, which she twined around her finger, was it possible to imagine it? Was it possible to be thus near her; to hear her breathe? She breathed! then the stars might breathe also. Gilliatt felt a thrill through him. He was the most miserable and yet the happiest of men. He knew not what to do. His delirious joy at seeing her annihilated him. Was it indeed *Déruchette* there, and he so near? His thoughts, bewildered and yet fixed, were fascinated by that figure as by a dazzling jewel. He gazed upon her neck—her hair. He did not even say to himself that all that would now belong to him, that before long—to-morrow, perhaps—he would have the right to take off that cap, to unknot that ribbon. He would not have conceived for a moment the audacity of thinking even so far. Touching in idea is almost like touching with the hand. Love was with Gilliatt like honey to the bear. He thought confusedly; he knew not what possessed him. The nightingale still sang. He felt as if about to breathe his life out.

The idea of rising, of jumping over the wall, of speaking to *Déruchette*, never came into his mind. If it had, he would have turned and fled. If anything resembling a thought had begun to dawn in his mind, it was this: that *Déruchette* was there, that he wanted nothing more, and that eternity had begun.

A noise aroused them both—her from her reverie—him from his ecstasy.

Some one was walking in the garden. It was not possible to see who was approaching on account of the trees. It was the footstep of a man.

Déruchette raised her eyes.

The steps drew nearer, then ceased. The person walking had stopped. He

must have been quite near. The path beside which was the bench wound between two clumps of trees. The stranger was there in the alley between the trees, at a few paces from the seat.

Accident had so placed the branches, that *Déruchette* could see the new comer while *Gilliatt* could not.

The moon cast on the ground beyond the trees a shadow which reached to the garden seat.

Gilliatt could see this shadow.

He looked at *Déruchette*.

She was quite pale; her mouth was partly open, as with a suppressed cry of surprise. She had just half risen from the bench, and sunk again upon it. There was in her attitude a mixture of fascination with a desire to fly. Her surprise was enchantment mingled with timidity. She had upon her lips almost the light of a smile, with the fulness of tears in her eyes. She seemed as if transfigured by that presence; as if the being whom she saw before her belonged not to this earth. The reflection of an angel was in her look.

The stranger, who was to *Gilliatt* only a shadow, spoke. A voice issued from the trees, softer than the voice of a woman; yet it was the voice of a man. *Gilliatt* heard these words:

"I see you, mademoiselle, every Sunday and every Thursday. They tell me that once you used not to come so often. It is a remark that has been made. I ask your pardon. I have never spoken to you; it was my duty; but I come to speak to you to-day, for it is still my duty. It is right that I speak to you first. The Cashmere sails to-morrow. This is why I have come. You walk every evening in your garden. It would be wrong of me to know your habits so well, if I had not the thought that I have. Mademoiselle, you are poor; since this morning I am rich. Will you have me for your husband?"

Déruchette joined her two hands in a suppliant attitude, and looked at the speaker, silent, with fixed eyes, and trembling from head to foot.

The voice continued:

"I love you. God made not the heart

of man to be silent. He has promised him eternity with the intention that he should not be alone. There is for me but one woman upon earth. It is you. I think of you as of a prayer. My faith is in God, and my hope in you. What wings I have you bear. You are my life, and already my supreme happiness."

"Sir," said *Déruchette*, "there is no one to answer in the house!"

The voice rose again:

"Yes, I have encouraged that dream. Heaven has not forbidden us to dream. You are like a glory in my eyes. I love you deeply, mademoiselle. To me you are holy innocence. I know it is the hour at which your household have retired to rest, but I had no choice of any other moment. Do you remember that passage of the Bible which some one read before us; it was the twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis. I have thought of it often since. *M. Hérode* said to me, you must have a rich wife. I replied no, I must have a poor wife. I speak to you, mademoiselle, without venturing to approach you; I would step even further back if it was your wish that my shadow should not touch your feet. You alone are supreme. You will come to me if such is your will. I love and wait. You are the living form of a benediction."

"I did not know, sir," stammered *Déruchette*, "that any one remarked me on Sundays and Thursdays."

The voice continued:

"We are powerless against celestial things. The whole Law is love. Marriage is Canaan; you are to me the promised land of beauty."

Déruchette replied, "I did not think I did wrong any more than other persons who are strict."

The voice continued:

"God manifests his will in the flowers, in the light of dawn, in the spring; and love is of his ordaining. You are beautiful in this holy shadow of night. This garden has been tended by you; in its perfumes there is something of your breath. The affinities of our souls do not depend on us. They cannot be counted with our sins. You were there, that was all. I

was there, that was all. I did nothing but feel that I loved you. Sometimes my eyes rested upon you. I was wrong, but what could I do. It was through looking at you that all happened. I could not restrain my gaze. There are mysterious impulses which are above our search. The heart is the chief of all temples. To have your spirit in my house—this is the terrestrial paradise for which I hope. Say, will you be mine. As long as I was poor, I spoke not. I know your age. You are twenty-one; I am twenty-six. I go to-morrow; if you refuse me I return no more. Oh, be my betrothed; will you not? More than once have my eyes, in spite of myself, addressed to you that question. I love you; answer me. I will speak to your uncle as soon as he is able to receive me; but I turn first to you. To Rebecca I plead for Rebecca; unless you love me not.”

Déruchette hung her head, and murmured :

“Oh! I worship him.”

The words were spoken in a voice so low, that only Gilliatt heard them.

She remained with her head lowered as if by shading her face she hoped to conceal her thoughts.

There was a pause. No leaf among the trees was stirred. It was that solemn and peaceful moment when the slumber of external things mingles with the sleep of living creatures; and night seems to listen to the beating of Nature's heart. In the midst of that retirement, like a harmony making the silence more complete, rose the wide murmur of the sea.

The voice was heard again.

“Mademoiselle!”

Déruchette started.

Again the voice spoke.

“You are silent.”

“What would you have me say?”

“I wait for your reply.”

“God has heard it,” said Déruchette.

Then the voice became almost sonorous, and at the same time softer than before, and these words issued from the leaves as from a burning bush :

“You are my betrothed. Come then to me. Let the blue sky, with all its stars,

be witness of this taking of my soul to thine; and let our first embrace be mingled with that firmament.”

Déruchette arose, and remained an instant motionless, looking straight before her, doubtless in another's eyes. Then, with slow steps, with head erect, her arms drooping, but with the fingers of her hands wide apart, like one who leans on some unseen support, she advanced towards the trees, and was out of sight.

A moment afterwards, instead of the one shadow upon the gravelled walk, there were two. They mingled together. Gilliatt saw at his feet the embrace of those two shadows.

In certain moments of crisis, time flows from us as his sands from the hour-glass, and we have no feeling of his flight. That pair on the one hand, who were ignorant of the presence of a witness, and saw him not; on the other, that witness of their joy who could not see them, but who knew of their presence—how many minutes did they remain thus in that mysterious suspension of themselves? It would be impossible to say. Suddenly a noise burst forth at a distance. A voice was heard crying “Help!” and the harbor bell began to sound. It is probable that in those celestial transports of delight they heard no echo of that tumult.

The bell continued to ring. Any one who had sought Gilliatt then in the angle of the wall would have found him no longer there.

BOOK II.

GRATITUDE AND DESPOTISM.

I.

JOY SURROUNDED BY TORTURES.

MESS LETHIERRY pulled the bell furiously, then stopped abruptly. A man had just turned the corner of the quay. It was Gilliatt.

Lethierry ran towards him, or rather flung himself upon him; seized his hand

between his own, and looked him in the face for a moment, silent. It was the silence of an explosion struggling to find an issue.

Then pulling and shaking him with violence, and squeezing him in his arms, he compelled him to enter the lower room of the Bravées, pushed back with his heel the door which had remained half opened, sat down, or sank into a chair beside a great table lighted by the moon, the reflection of which gave a vague pallor to Gilliatt's face, and with a voice of intermingled laughter and tears, cried :

"Ah! my son; my player of the bagpipe! I knew well that it was you. The sloop, *parbleu!* Tell me the story. You went there, then. Why, they would have burnt you a hundred years ago! It is magic! There isn't a screw missing. I have looked at everything already, recognized everything, handled everything. I guessed that the paddles were in the two cases. And here you are once more! I have been looking for you in the little cabin. I rang the bell. I was seeking for you. I said to myself, 'Where is he, that I may devour him?' You must admit that wonderful things do come to pass. He has brought back life to me. *Tonnerre!* you are an angel! Yes, yes; it is my engine. Nobody will believe it; people will see it, and say, 'It can't be true.' Not a tap, not a pin missing. The feed-pipe has never budged an inch. It is incredible that there should have been no more damage. We have only to put a little oil. But how did you accomplish it? To think that the Durande will be moving again. The axle of the wheels must have been taken to pieces by some watchmaker. Give me your word that I am not crazy."

He sprang to his feet, breathed a moment, and continued :

"Assure me of that. What a revolution! I pinched myself to be certain I was not dreaming. You are my child, you are my son, you are my Providence. Brave lad! To go and fetch my good old engine. In the open sea, among those cut-throat rocks. I have seen some strange things in my life; nothing like that. I have known Parisians, who were veritable

demons, but I'll defy them to have done that. It beats the Bastille. I have seen the *gauchos* laboring in the *Pampas*, with a crooked branch of a tree for a plough and a bundle of thorn bushes for a harrow, dragged by a leathern strap; they get harvests of wheat that way, with grains as big as hedgenuts. But that is a trifle compared with your feats. You have performed a miracle—a real one. Ah! *gredin!* let me hug you. How they will gossip in St. Sampson. I shall set to work at once to build the boat. It is astonishing that the crank is all right. Gentlemen, he has been to the Douvres: I say to the Douvres. He went alone. The Douvres! I defy you to find a worse spot. Do you know, have they told you, that it's proved that Clubin sent the Durande to the bottom to swindle me out of money which he had to bring me? He made Tangrouille drunk. It's a long story. I'll tell you another day of his piratical tricks. I, stupid idiot, had confidence in Clubin. But he trapped himself, the villain, for he couldn't have got away. There is a God above, scoundrel! Do you see, Gilliatt, bang! bang! the irons in the fire; we'll begin at once to rebuild the Durande. We'll have her twenty feet longer. They build them longer now than they did. I'll buy the wood from Dantzic and Brême. Now I have got the machinery they will give me credit again. They'll have confidence now."

Mess Lethierry stopped, lifted his eyes with that look which sees the heavens through the roof, and muttered, "Yes, there is a power on high!"

Then he placed the middle finger of his right hand between his two eyebrows, and tapped with his nail there, an action which indicates a project passing through the mind, and he continued :

"Nevertheless, to begin again, on a grand scale, a little ready money would have been useful. Ah! if I only had my three bank notes, the seventy-five thousand francs that that robber Rantaine returned, and that vagabond Clubin stole."

Gilliatt silently felt in his pocket, and



DÉRUCHETTE IN THE GARDEN.

Hugo, vol. IV., p. 186.

drew out something which he placed before him. It was the leathern belt that he had brought back. He opened, and spread it out upon the table; in the inside the word "Clubin" could be deciphered in the light of the moon. He then took out of the pocket of the belt a box, and out of the box three pieces of paper, which he unfolded and offered to Lethierry.

Lethierry examined them. It was light enough to read the figures "1000," and the word "thousand" was also perfectly visible. Mess Lethierry took the three notes, placed them on the table one beside the other, looked at them, looked at Gilliatt, stood for a moment dumb; and then began again, like an eruption after an explosion:

"These too! You are a marvel. My bank-notes! all three. A thousand pounds each. My seventy-five thousand francs. Why, you must have gone down to the infernal regions. It is Clubin's belt. Pardieu! I can read his vile name. Gilliatt has brought back engine and money too. There will be something to put in the papers. I will buy some timber of the finest quality. I guess how it was; you found his carcase; Clubin mouldering away in some corner. We'll have some Dantzic pine and Brême oak; we'll have a first-rate planking—oak within and pine without. In old times they didn't build so well, but their work lasted longer; the wood was better seasoned, because they did not build so much. We'll build the hull perhaps of elm. Elm is good for the parts in the water. To be dry sometimes, and sometimes wet, rots the timbers; the elm requires to be always wet; it's a wood that feeds upon water. What a splendid Durande we'll build. The lawyers will not trouble me again. I shall want no more credit. I have some money of my own. Did ever any one see a man like Gilliatt. I was struck down to the ground, I was a dead man. He comes and sets me up again as firm as ever. And all the while I was never thinking about him. He had gone clean out of my mind; but I recollect everything now. Poor lad! Ah! by the way, you know you are to marry Déruchette."

Gilliatt leaned with his back against the wall, like one who staggers, and said in a tone very low, but distinct:

"No."

Mess Lethierry started.

"How, no!"

Gilliatt replied:

"I do not love her."

Mess Lethierry went to the window, opened and reclosed it, took the three bank-notes, folded them, placed the iron box on top, scratched his head, seized Clubin's belt, flung it violently against the wall, and exclaimed:

"You must be mad."

He thrust his fists into his pockets and exclaimed:

"You don't love Déruchette? What! was it at me, then, that you used to play the bagpipe?"

Gilliatt, still supporting himself by the wall, turned pale, as a man near his end. As he became pale, Lethierry became redder.

"There's an idiot for you! He doesn't love Déruchette. Very good; make up your mind to love her, for she shall never marry any but you. A devilish pretty story that; and you think that I believe you. If there is anything really the matter with you, send for a doctor; but don't talk nonsense. You can't have had time to quarrel, or get out of temper with her. It is true that lovers are great fools sometimes. Come now, what are your reasons? If you have any, say. People don't make geese of themselves without reasons. But, I have wool in my ears; perhaps I didn't understand. Repeat to me what you said."

Gilliatt replied:

"I said, No!"

"You said, No. He holds to it, the lunatic! You must be crazy. You said, No. Here's a stupidity beyond anything ever heard of. Why, people have had their heads shaved for much less than that. What! you don't like Déruchette? Oh, then, it was out of affection for the old man that you did all these things? It was for the sake of papa that you went to the Douvres, that you endured cold and heat, and was half dead with hunger and thirst,

and ate the limpets off the rocks, and had the fog, the rain, and the wind for your bedroom, and brought me back my machine, just as you might bring a pretty woman her little canary that had escaped from its cage. And the tempest that we had three days ago. Do you think I don't bear it in mind? You must have had a time of it! It was in the midst of all this misery, alongside of my old craft, that you shaped, and cut, and turned, and twisted, and dragged about, and filed, and sawed, and carpentered, and schemed, and performed more miracles there by yourself than all the saints in paradise. Ah! you annoyed me enough once with your bagpipe. They call it a *biniau* in Brittany. Always the same tune, too, silly fellow. And yet you don't love Déruchette? I don't know what is the matter with you. I recollect it all now. I was there in the corner; Déruchette said, 'He shall be my husband;' and so you shall. You don't love her! Either you must be mad, or else I am mad. And you stand there, and speak not a word. I tell you you are not at liberty to do all the things you have done, and then say, after all, 'I don't love Déruchette.' People don't do others services in order to put them in a passion. Well; if you don't marry her, she shall be single all her life. In the first place, I shall want you. You must be the pilot of the *Durande*. Do you imagine I mean to part with you like that? No, no, my brave boy; I don't let you go. I have got you now; I'll not even listen to you. Where will they find a sailor like you? You are the man I want. But why don't you speak?"

Meanwhile the harbor bell had aroused the household and the neighborhood. Douce and Grace had risen, and had just entered the lower room, silent and astonished. Grace had a candle in her hand. A group of neighbors, townspeople, sailors, and peasants, who had rushed out of their houses, were outside on the quay, gazing in wonderment at the funnel of the *Durande* in the sloop. Some, hearing Lethierry's voice in the lower room, began to glide in by the half-opened door. Between the faces of two worthy old women ap-

peared that of *Sieur Landoys*, who had the good fortune always to find himself where he would have regretted to have been absent.

Men feel a satisfaction in having witnesses of their joys. The sort of scattered support which a crowd presents pleases them at such times; their delight draws new life from it. *Mess Lethierry* suddenly perceived that there were persons about him; and he welcomed the audience at once.

"Ah! you are here, my friends? I am very glad to see you. You know the news? That man has been there, and brought it back. How d'ye do, *Sieur Landoys*? When I woke up just now, the first thing I spied was the funnel. It was under my window. There's not a nail missing. They make pictures of *Napoleon's* deeds; but I think more of that than of the battle of *Austerlitz*. You have just left your beds, my good friends. The *Durande* has found you sleeping. While you are putting on your night-caps and blowing out your candles there are others working like heroes. We are a set of cowards and do-nothings; we sit at home rubbing our rheumatisms; but happily that does not prevent there being some of another stamp. The man of the *Bû de la Rue* has arrived from the *Douvres* rocks. He has fished up the *Durande* from the bottom of the sea; and fished up my money out of *Clubin's* pocket, from a greater depth still. But how did you contrive to do it? All the powers of darkness were against you—the wind and the sea—the sea and the wind. It's true enough that you are a magician. Those who say that are not so stupid after all. The *Durande* is back again. The tempests may rage now; that cuts the ground from under them. My friends, I can inform you that there was no shipwreck after all. I have examined all the machinery. It is like new, perfect. The valves go as easily as rollers. You would think them made yesterday. You know that the waste water is carried away by a tube inside another tube, through which come the waters from the boilers; this was to economize the heat. Well; the two tubes are

there as good as ever. The complete engine, in fact. She is all there, her wheels and all. Ah! you shall marry her."

"Marry the complete engine?" asked *Sieur Landoys*.

"No; *Déruchette*; yes; the engine. Both of them. He shall be my double son-in-law. He shall be her captain. Good day, Captain *Gilliatt*; for there will soon be a captain of the *Durande*. We are going to do a world of business again. There will be trade, circulation, cargoes of oxen and sheep. I wouldn't give *St. Sampson* for London now. And there stands the author of all this. It was a curious adventure, I can tell you. You will read about it on Saturday in old *Mauger's 'Gazette.'* Malicious *Gilliatt* is very malicious. What's the meaning of these *Louis-d'ors* here?"

Mess Lethierry had just observed, through the opening of the lid, that there was some gold in the box upon the notes. He seized it, opened and emptied it into the palm of his hand, and put the handful of guineas on the table.

"For the poor, *Sieur Landoys*. Give those sovereigns from me to the constable of *St. Sampson*. You recollect *Rantaine's* letter. I showed it to you. Very well; I've got the bank-notes. Now we can buy some oak and fir, and go to work at carpentering. Look you! Do you remember the weather of three days ago? What a hurricane of wind and rain! *Gilliatt* endured all that upon the *Douvres*. That didn't prevent his taking the wreck to pieces, as I might take my watch. Thanks to him, I am on my legs again. Old '*Lethierry's* galley' is going to run again, ladies and gentlemen. A nut-shell with a couple of wheels and a funnel. I always had that idea. I used to say to myself, one day I will do it. That was a good long time back. It was an idea that came in my head at Paris, at the coffee-house at the corner of the *Rue Christine* and the *Rue Dauphine*, when I was reading a paper which had an account of it. Do you know that *Gilliatt* would think nothing of putting the machine at *Marly* in his pocket, and walking about with it? He is wrought-iron, that man; tempered

steel, a mariner of invaluable qualities, an excellent smith, an extraordinary fellow, more astonishing than the Prince of *Hohenlohe*. That is what I call a man with brains. We are children by the side of him. Sea-wolves we may think ourselves; but the sea-lion is there. Hurrah for *Gilliatt*! I do not know how he has done it; but certainly he must have been the devil. And how can I do other than give him *Déruchette*."

For some minutes *Déruchette* had been in the room. She had not spoken or moved since she entered. She had glided in like a shadow, had sat down almost unperceived behind *Mess Lethierry*, who stood before her, loquacious, stormy, joyful, abounding in gestures, and talking in a loud voice. A little while after her another silent apparition had appeared. A man attired in black, with a white cravat, holding his hat in his hand, stood in the doorway. There were now several candles among the group, which had gradually increased in number. These lights were near the man attired in black. His profile and youthful and pleasing complexion showed itself against the dark background with the clearness of an engraving on a medal. He leaned with his shoulder against the framework of the door, and held his left hand to his forehead, an attitude of unconscious grace, which contrasted the breadth of his forehead with the smallness of his hand. There was an expression of anguish in his contracted lips, as he looked on and listened with profound attention. The standers-by having recognized *M. Caudray*, the rector of the parish, had fallen back to allow him to pass; but he remained upon the threshold. There was hesitation in his posture, but decision in his looks, which now and then met those of *Déruchette*. With regard to *Gilliatt*, whether by chance or design, he was in shadow, and was only perceived indistinctly.

At first *Mess Lethierry* did not observe *Caudray*, but he saw *Déruchette*. He went to her and kissed her fervently upon the forehead; stretching forth his hand at the same time towards the dark corner where *Gilliatt* was standing.

"Déruchette," he said, "we are rich again; and there is your future husband."

Déruchette raised her head, and looked into the dusky corner bewildered.

Mess Lethierry continued:

"The marriage shall take place immediately, if it can; they shall have a license; the formalities here are not very troublesome; the dean can do what he pleases; people are married before they have time to turn round. It is not as in France, where you must have bans, and publications, and delays, and all that fuss. You will be able to boast of being the wife of a brave man. No one can say he is not. I thought so from the day when I saw him come back from Herm with the little cannon. But now he comes back from the Douvres with his fortune and mine, and the fortune of this country. A man of whom the world will talk a great deal more one day. You said once, 'I will marry him;' and you shall marry him, and you shall have little children, and I will be grandpapa; and you will have the good fortune to be the wife of a noble fellow, who can work, who can be useful to his fellow-men; a surprising fellow, worth a hundred others; a man who can rescue other people's inventions, a providence! At all events, you will not have married, like so many other silly girls about here, a soldier or a priest, that is, a man who kills or a man who lies. But what are you doing there, Gilliatt? Nobody can see you. Douce, Grace, everybody there! Bring a light, I say. Light up my son-in-law for me. I betroth you to each other, my children: here stands your husband, here my son, Gilliatt of the Bû de la Rue, that noble fellow, that great seaman; I will have no other son-in-law, and you no other husband. I pledge my word to that once more in God's name. Ah! you are there, Monsieur the Curé. You will marry these young people for us."

Lethierry's eye had just fallen upon Caudray.

Douce and Grace had done as they were directed. Two candles placed upon the table cast a light upon Gilliatt from head to foot.

"There's a fine fellow," said Mess Lethierry.

Gilliatt's appearance was hideous.

He was in the condition in which he had that morning set sail from the rocks; in rags, his bare elbows showing through his sleeves; his beard long, his hair rough and wild; his eyes bloodshot, his skin peeling, his hands covered with wounds; his feet naked. Some of the blisters left by the devil-fish were still visible upon his arms.

Lethierry gazed at him.

"This is my son-in-law," he said. "How he has struggled with the sea. He is all in rags. What shoulders; what hands. There's a splendid fellow!"

Grace ran to Déruchette and supported her head. She had fainted.

II.

THE LEATHERN TRUNK.

At break of day St. Sampson was on foot, and all the people of St. Peter's Port began to flock there. The resurrection of the Durande caused a commotion in the island not unlike what was caused by the "Salette" in the South of France. There was a crowd on the quay staring at the funnel standing erect in the sloop. They were anxious to see and handle the machinery; but Lethierry, after making a new and triumphant survey of the whole by daylight, had placed two sailors aboard with instructions to prevent any one approaching it. The funnel, however, furnished food enough for contemplation. The crowd gaped with astonishment. They talked of nothing but Gilliatt. They remarked on his surname of "malicious Gilliatt;" and their admiration wound up with the remark, "It is not pleasant to have people in the island who can do things like that."

Mess Lethierry was seen from outside the house, seated at a table before the window, writing, with one eye on the paper and another on the sloop. He was so completely absorbed that he had only once stopped to call Douce and ask after Déruchette. Douce replied, "Mademoiselle

has risen and is gone out." Mess Lethierry replied, "She is right to take the air. She was a little unwell last night, owing to the heat. There was a crowd in the room. This and her surprise and joy, and the windows being all closed, overcame her. She will have a husband to be proud of." And he had gone on with his writing. He had already finished and sealed two letters, addressed to the most important shipbuilders at Brême. He now finished the sealing of a third.

The noise of a wheel upon the quay induced him to look up. He leaned out of the window, and observed coming from the path which led to the *Bû de la Rue* a boy pushing a wheelbarrow. The boy was going towards St. Peter's Port. In the barrow was a portmanteau of brown leather, studded with nails of brass and white metal.

Mess Lethierry called to the boy :

"Where are you going, my lad?"

The boy stopped, and replied :

"To the Cashmere."

"What for?"

"To take this trunk aboard."

"Very good; you shall take these three letters too."

Mess Lethierry opened the drawer of his table, took a piece of string, tied the three letters which he had just written across and across, and threw the packet to the boy, who caught it between his hands.

"Tell the captain of the Cashmere they are my letters, and to take care of them. They are for Germany—Brême *via* London."

"I can't speak to the captain, Mess Lethierry."

"Why not?"

"The Cashmere is not at the quay."

"Ah!"

"She is in the roads."

"Ay, true; on account of the sea."

"I can only speak to the man who takes the things aboard."

"You will tell him, then, to look to the letters."

"Very well, Mess Lethierry."

"At what time does the Cashmere sail?"

"At twelve."

"The tide will flow at noon; she will have it against her."

"But she will have the wind," answered the lad.

"Boy," said Mess Lethierry, pointing with his forefinger at the engine in the sloop, "do you see that? There is something which laughs at winds and tides."

The boy put the letters in his pocket, took up the handles of the barrow again, and went on his way towards the town. Mess Lethierry called "Douce! Grace!"

Grace opened the door a little way.

"What is it, Mess?"

"Come in and wait a moment."

Mess Lethierry took a sheet of paper, and began to write. If Grace, standing behind him, had been curious, and had leaned forward while he was writing, she might have read as follows:—

"I have written to Brême for the timber. I have appointments all the morning with carpenters for the estimate. The rebuilding will go on fast. You must go yourself to the Deanery for a license. It is my wish that the marriage should take place as soon as possible; immediately would be better. I am busy about the *Durande*. Do you be busy about *Déruchette*."

He dated it and signed "Lethierry." He did not take the trouble to seal it, but merely folded it in four, and handed it to Grace, saying :

"Take that to Gilliatt."

"To the *Bû de la Rue*?"

"To the *Bû de la Rue*."

BOOK III.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE "CASHMERE."

I.

THE HAVELET NEAR THE CHURCH.

WHEN there is a crowd at St. Sampson, St. Peter's Port is soon deserted. A point of curiosity at a given place is like an air-pump. News travel fast in small places.

Going to see the funnel of the *Durande* under Mess Lethierry's window had been, since sunrise, the business of the Guernsey folks. Every other event was eclipsed by this. The death of the Dean of St. Asaph was forgotten, together with the question of the Rev. Mr. Caudray, his sudden riches, and the departure of the Cashmere. The machinery of the *Durande* brought back from the Douvres rocks was the order of the day. People were incredulous. The shipwreck had appeared extraordinary, the salvage seemed impossible. Everybody hastened to assure himself of the truth by the help of his own eyes. Business of every kind was suspended. Long strings of townfolk with their families, from the "Vesin" up to the "Mess," men and women, gentlemen, mothers with children, infants with dolls, were coming by every road or pathway to see "the thing to be seen" at the Bravées, turning their backs upon St. Peter's Port. Many shops at St. Peter's Port were closed. In the Commercial Arcade there was an absolute stagnation in buying and selling. The *Durande* alone obtained attention. Not a single shopkeeper had had a "handsell" that morning, except a jeweler, who was surprised at having sold a wedding-ring to "a sort of man who appeared in a great hurry, and who asked for the house of the Dean." The shops which remained open were centres of gossip, where loiterers discussed the miraculous salvage. There was not a foot-passenger at the "Hyvreuse," which is known in these days, nobody knows why, as Cambridge Park; no one was in the High Street, then called the Grand Rue; nor in Smith Street, known then only as the Rue des Forges; nobody in Hauteville. The esplanade itself was deserted. One might have guessed it to be Sunday. A visit from a Royal personage to review the militia at the Ancresse could not have emptied the town more completely. All this hubbub about "a nobody" like Gilliat, caused a good deal of shrugging of the shoulders among persons of grave and correct habits.

The church of St. Peter's Port, with its three gable-ends placed side by side, its

transept and its steeple, stands at the water's side at the end of the harbor, and nearly on the landing-place itself, where it welcomes those who arrive, and gives the departing "God speed." It represents the capital letter at the beginning of that long line which forms the front of the town towards the sea.

It is both the parish church of St. Peter's Port and the chief place of the Deanery of the whole island. Its officiating minister is the surrogate of the bishop, a clergyman in full orders.

The harbor of St. Peter's Port, a very fine and large port at the present day, was at that epoch, and even up to ten years ago, less considerable than the harbor of St. Sampson. It was enclosed by two enormous thick walls, beginning at the water's edge on both sides, and curving till they almost joined again at the extremities, where there stood a little white lighthouse. Under this lighthouse, a narrow gullet, bearing still the two rings of the chain with which it was the custom to bar the passage in ancient times, formed the entrance for vessels. The harbor of St. Peter's Port might be well compared with the claws of a huge lobster opened a little way. This kind of pincers took from the ocean a portion of the sea, which it compelled to remain calm. But during the easterly winds the waves rolled heavily against the narrow entrance, the port was agitated, and it was better not to enter. This is what had happened with the Cashmere that day, which had accordingly anchored in the roads.

The vessels, during the easterly winds, preferred this course, which besides saved them the port dues. On these occasions the boatmen of the town, a hardy race of mariners whom the new port has thrown out of employment, came in their boats to fetch passengers at the landing-place or at stations on the shore, and carried them with their luggage, often in heavy seas, but always without accident, to the vessels about to sail. The east wind blows off the shore, and is very favorable for the passage to England: the vessel at such times rolls, but does not pitch.

When a vessel happened to be in the

port, everybody embarked from the quay. When it was in the roads they took their choice, and embarked from any point of the coast near the moorings. The "Havelet" was one of these creeks. This little harbor (which is the signification of the word) was near the town, but was so solitary that it seemed far off. This solitude was owing to the shelter of the high cliffs of Fort St. George, which overlooked this retired inlet. The Havelet was accessible by several paths. The most direct was along the water's side. It had the advantage of leading to the town and to the church in five minutes' walk, and the disadvantage of being covered by the sea twice a day. The other paths were more or less abrupt, and led down to the creek through gaps in the steep rocks. Even in broad daylight, it was dusk in the Havelet. Huge blocks overhanging it on all sides, and thick bushes and brambles cast a sort of soft twilight upon the rocks and waves below. Nothing could be more peaceful than this spot in calm weather; nothing more tumultuous during heavy seas. There were ends of branches there which were always wet with the foam. In the spring time, the place was full of flowers, of nests, of perfumes, of birds, of butterflies, and bees. Thanks to recent improvements, this wild nook no longer exists. Fine, straight lines have taken the place of these wild features; masonry, quays, and little gardens, have made their appearance; earth-work has been the rage, and taste has finally subdued the eccentricities of the cliff, and the irregularities of the rocks below.

II.

DESPAIR CONFRONTS DESPAIR.

It was a little before ten o'clock in the morning. The crowd at St. Sampson, according to all appearance, was increasing. The multitude, feverish with curiosity, was moving towards the north; and the Havelet, which is in the south, was more deserted than ever.

Notwithstanding this, there was a boat there and a boatman. In the boat was a

travelling bag. The boatman seemed to be waiting for some one.

The Cashmere was visible at anchor in roads, as she did not start till mid-day; there was as yet no sign of moving aboard.

A passer-by, who had listened from one of the ladder-paths up the cliffs overhead, would have heard a murmur of words in the Havelet, and if he had leaned over the overhanging cliff might have seen, at some distance from the boat, in a corner among the rocks and branches, where the eye of the boatman could not reach them, a man and a woman. It was Caudray and Déruchette.

These obscure nooks on the seashore, the chosen places of lady bathers, are not always so solitary as is believed. Persons are sometimes observed and heard there. Those who seek shelter and solitude in them may easily be followed through the thick bushes, and, thanks to the multiplicity and entanglement of the paths, the granite and the shrubs which favor the stolen interview, may also favor the witness.

Caudray and Déruchette stood face to face, looking into each other's eyes, and holding each other by the hand. Déruchette was speaking. Caudray was silent. A tear that had gathered upon his eyelash hung there and did not fall.

Grief and strong passion were imprinted in his calm, religious countenance. A painful resignation was there too—a resignation hostile to faith, though springing from it. Upon that face, simply devout until then, there was the commencement of a fatal expression. He who had hitherto meditated only on doctrine, had begun to meditate on Fate, an unhealthy meditation for a priest. Faith dissolves under its action. Nothing disturbs the religious mind more than that bending under the weight of the unknown. Life seems a perpetual succession of events, to which man submits. We never know from which direction the sudden blow will come. Misery and happiness enter or make their exit, like unexpected guests. Their laws, their orbit, their principle of gravitation, are beyond man's grasp.

Virtue conducts not to happiness, nor crime to retribution: conscience has one logic, fate another; and neither coincide. Nothing is foreseen. We live confusedly, and from hand to mouth. Conscience is the straight line, life is the whirlwind, which creates above man's head either black chaos or the blue sky. Fate does not practice the art of gradations. Her wheel turns sometimes so fast that we can scarcely distinguish the interval between one revolution and another, or the link between yesterday and to-day. Caudray was a believer whose faith did not exclude reason, and whose priestly training did not shut him out from passion. Those religious systems which impose celibacy on the priesthood are not without reason for it. Nothing really destroys the individuality of the priest more than love. All sorts of clouds seemed to darken Caudray's soul. He looked too long into Déruchette's eyes. These two beings worshipped each other.

There was in Caudray's eye the mute adoration of despair.

Déruchette spoke.

"You must not leave me. I shall not have strength. I thought I could bid you farewell. I cannot. Why did you come yesterday? You should not have come if you were going so soon. I never spoke to you. I loved you; but knew it not. Only that day, when M. Hérode read to us the story of Rebecca, and when your eyes met mine, my cheeks were like fire, and I thought only of how Rebecca's face must have burnt like mine; and yet, if any one had told me yesterday that I loved you, I might have laughed at it. This is what is so terrible. It has been like a treason. I did not take heed. I went to the church, I saw you, I thought everybody there was like myself. I do not reproach you; you did nothing to make me love you; you did nothing but look at me; it is not your fault if you look at people; and yet that made me love you so much. I did not even suspect it. When you took up the book it was a flood of light; when others took it, it was but a book. You raised your eyes sometimes; you spoke of archangels; oh! you were my archangel.

What you said penetrated my thoughts at once. Before then, I know not even whether I believed in God. Since I have known you, I have learnt to pray. I used to say to Douce, dress me quickly, lest I should be late at the service; and I hastened to the church. Such it was with me to love some one. I did not know the cause. I said to myself, how devout I am becoming. It is from you that I have learnt that I do not go to church for God's service. It is true; I went for your sake. You spoke so well, and when you raised your arms to heaven, you seemed to hold my heart within your two white hands. I was foolish; but I did not know it. Shall I tell you your fault? It was your coming to me in the garden; it was your speaking to me. If you had said nothing, I should have known nothing. If you had gone, I should, perhaps, have been sad, but now I should die. Since I know that I love you, you cannot leave me. Of what are you thinking? You do not seem to listen to me."

Caudray replied:

"You heard what was said last night?"

"Ah, me!"

"What can I do against that?"

They were silent for a moment. Caudray continued:

"There is but one duty left to me. It is to depart."

"And mine to die. Oh! how I wish there was no sea, but only sky. It seems to me as if that would settle all, and that our departure would be the same. It was wrong to speak to me; why did you speak to me? Do not go. What will become of me? I tell you I shall die. You will be far off when I shall be in my grave. Oh! my heart will break. I am very wretched; yet my uncle is not unkind."

It was the first time in her life that Déruchette had ever said "my uncle." Until then she had always said "my father."

Caudray stepped back and made a sign to the boatman. Déruchette heard the sound of the boat hook among the shingle, and the step of the man on the gunwale of the boat.

"No! no!" cried Déruchette.

"It must be, *Déruchette*," replied *Caudray*.

"No! never!* For the sake of an engine—impossible. Did you see that horrible man last night? You cannot abandon me thus. You are wise; you can find a means. It is impossible that you bade me come here this morning with the idea of leaving me. I have never done anything to deserve this; you can have no reproach to make me. Is it by that vessel that you intended to sail? I will not let you go. You shall not leave me. Heaven does not open thus to close so soon. I know you will remain. Besides, it is not yet time. Oh! how I love you."

And pressing closely to him, she interlaced the fingers of each hand behind his neck, as if partly to make a bond of her two arms for detaining him, and partly with her joined hands to pray. He moved away this gentle restraint, while *Déruchette* resisted as long as she could.

Déruchette sank upon a projection of the rock covered with ivy, lifting by an unconscious movement the sleeve of her dress up to the elbow, and exhibiting her graceful arm. A pale suffused light was in her eyes. The boat was approaching.

Caudray held her head between his hands. He touched her hair with a sort of religious care, fixed his eyes upon her for some moments, then kissed her on the forehead fervently, and in an accent trembling with anguish, and in which might have been traced the uprooting of his soul, he uttered the word which has so often resounded in the depths of the human heart, "Farewell!"

Déruchette burst into loud sobs.

At this moment they heard a voice near them, which said solemnly and deliberately:

"Why should you not be man and wife?"

Caudray raised his head. *Déruchette* looked up.

Gilliatt stood before them.

He had approached by a bye-path.

He was no longer the same man that he had appeared on the previous night. He had arranged his hair, shaved his beard, put on shoes, and a white shirt,

with a large collar turned over, sailor-fashion. He wore a sailor's costume, but all was new. A gold ring was on his little finger. He seemed profoundly calm. His sunburnt skin had become pale: a hue of sickly bronze overspread it.

They looked at him astonished. Though so changed, *Déruchette* recognized him. But the words which he had spoken were so far from what was passing in their minds at that moment, that they had left no distinct impression.

Gilliatt spoke again:

"Why should you say farewell? Be man and wife, and go together."

Déruchette started. A trembling seized her from head to foot.

Gilliatt continued:

"Miss *Lethierry* is a woman. She is of age. It depends only on herself. Her uncle is but her uncle. You love each other——"

Déruchette interrupted in a gentle voice, and asked, "How came you here?"

"Make yourselves one," repeated *Gilliatt*.

Déruchette began to have a sense of the meaning of his words. She stammered out:

"My poor uncle!"

"If the marriage was yet to be," said *Gilliatt*, "he would refuse. When it is over he will consent. Besides, you are going to leave here. When you return he will forgive."

Gilliatt added, with a slight touch of bitterness, "And then he is thinking of nothing just now but the rebuilding of his boat. This will occupy his mind during your absence. The *Durande* will console him."

"I cannot," said *Déruchette*, in a state of stupor which was not without its gleam of joy. "I must not leave him unhappy."

"It will be but for a short time," answered *Gilliatt*.

Caudray and *Déruchette* had been, as it were, bewildered. They recovered themselves now. The meaning of *Gilliatt*'s words became plainer as their surprise diminished. There was a slight cloud still before them; but their part was not to resist. We yield easily to those who come

to save. Objections to a return into Paradise are weak. There was something in the attitude of Déruchette, as she leaned imperceptibly upon her lover, which seemed to make common cause with Gilliatt's words. The enigma of the presence of this man, and of his utterances, which, in the mind of Déruchette in particular, produced various kinds of astonishment, was a thing apart. He said to them, "Be man and wife!" This was clear; if there was responsibility it was his. Déruchette had a confused feeling that, for many reasons, he had the right to decide upon her fate. Caudray murmured, as if plunged in thought, "An uncle is not a father."

His resolution was corrupted by the sudden and happy turn in his ideas. The probable scruples of the clergyman melted, and dissolved in his heart's love for Déruchette.

Gilliatt's tone became abrupt and harsh, and like the pulsations of fever.

"There must be no delay," he said. "You have time, but that is all. Come."

Caudray observed him attentively; and suddenly exclaimed:

"I recognize you. It was you who saved my life."

Gilliatt replied:

"I think not."

"Yonder," said Caudray, "at the extremity of the Banques."

"I do not know the place," said Gilliatt.

"It was on the very day that I arrived here."

"Let us lose no time," interrupted Gilliatt.

"And if I am not deceived, you are the man whom we met last night."

"Perhaps."

"What is your name?"

Gilliatt raised his voice:

"Boatman! wait there for us. We shall return soon. You asked me, Miss Lethierry, how I came to be here. The answer is very simple. I walked behind you. You are twenty-one. In this country, when persons are of age, and depend only on themselves, they may be married immediately. Let us take the path along the water-side. It is passable; the tide

will not rise here till noon. But lose no time. Come with me."

Déruchette and Caudray seemed to consult each other by a glance. They were standing close together motionless. They were intoxicated with joy. There are strange hesitations sometimes on the edge of the abyss of happiness. They understood, as it were, without understanding.

"His name is Gilliatt," whispered Déruchette.

Gilliatt interrupted them with a sort of tone of authority.

"What do you linger for?" he asked.

"I tell you to follow me."

"Whither?" asked Caudray.

"There!"

And Gilliatt pointed with his finger towards the spire of the church.

Gilliatt walked on before, and they followed him. His step was firm; but they walked unsteadily.

As they approached the church, an expression dawned upon those two pure and beautiful countenances, which was soon to become a smile. The approach to the church lighted them up. In the hollow eyes of Gilliatt there was the darkness of night. The beholder might have imagined that he saw a spectre leading two souls to Paradise.

Caudray and Déruchette scarcely took count of what had happened. The interposition of this man was like the branch clutched at by the drowning. They followed their guide with the docility of despair, leaning on the first comer. Those who feel themselves near death easily accept the accident which seems to save. Déruchette, more ignorant of life, was more confident. Caudray was thoughtful. Déruchette was of age, it was true. The English formalities of marriage are simple, especially in primitive parts, where the clergyman has almost a discretionary power; but would the Dean consent to celebrate the marriage without even inquiring whether the uncle consented? This was the question. Nevertheless, they could learn. In any case there would be but a delay.

But what was this man? and if it was really he whom Lethierry the night before

had declared should be his son-in-law, what could be the meaning of his actions? The very obstacle itself had become a providence. Caudray yielded; but his yielding was only the rapid and tacit assent of a man who feels himself saved from despair.

The pathway was uneven, and sometimes wet and difficult to pass. Caudray, absorbed in thought, did not observe the occasional pools of water or the heaps of shingle. But from time to time Gilliatt turned and said to him, "Take heed of those stones. Give her your hand."

III.

THE FORETHOUGHT OF SELF-SACRIFICE.

It struck ten as they entered the church.

By reason of the early hour, and also on account of the desertion of the town that day, the church was empty.

At the farther end, however, near the table which in the reformed church fulfils the place of the altar, there were three persons. They were the Dean, his evangelist, and the registrar. The Dean, who was the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, was seated; the evangelist and the registrar stood beside him.

A book was open upon the table.

Beside him, upon a credence-table, was another book. It was the parish register, and also open; and an attentive eye might have remarked a page on which was some writing, of which the ink was not yet dry. By the side of the register were a pen and a writing-desk.

The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode rose on perceiving Caudray.

"I have been expecting you," he said. "All is ready."

The Dean, in fact, wore his officiating robes.

Caudray looked towards Gilliatt.

The Reverend Doctor added, "I am at your service, brother;" and he bowed.

It was a bow which neither turned to right or left. It was evident from the direction of the Dean's gaze that he did not recognize the existence of any one but

Caudray, for Caudray was a clergyman and a gentleman. Neither Déruchette, who stood aside, nor Gilliatt, who was in the rear, were included in the salutation. His look was a sort of parenthesis in which none but Caudray were admitted. The observance of these little niceties constitutes an important feature in the maintenance of order and the preservation of society.

The Dean continued, with a graceful and dignified urbanity:

"I congratulate you, my colleague, from a double point of view. You have lost your uncle, and are about to take a wife; you are blessed with riches on the one hand, and happiness on the other. Moreover, thanks to the boat which they are about to rebuild, Mess Lethierry will also be rich; which is as it should be. Miss Lethierry was born in this parish; I have verified the date of her birth in the register. She is of age, and at her own disposal. Her uncle, too, who is her only relative, consents. You are anxious to be united immediately on account of your approaching departure. This I can understand; but this being the marriage of the rector of the parish, I should have been gratified to have seen it associated with a little more solemnity. I will consult your wishes by not detaining you longer than necessary. The essentials will be soon complied with. The form is already drawn up in the register, and it requires only the names to be filled in. By the terms of the law and custom, the marriage may be celebrated immediately after the inscription. The declaration necessary for the license has been duly made. I take upon myself a slight irregularity; for the application for the license ought to have been registered seven days in advance; but I yield to necessity and the urgency of your departure. Be it so, then. I will proceed with the ceremony. My evangelist will be the witness for the bridegroom; as regards the witness for the bride——"

The Dean turned towards Gilliatt. Gilliatt made a movement of his head.

"That is sufficient," said the Dean.

Caudray remained motionless; Déruchette

chette was happy, but no less powerless to move.

"Nevertheless," continued the Dean, "there is still an obstacle."

Déruchette started.

The Dean continued :

"The representative here present of Mess Lethierry applied for the license for you, and has signed the declaration on the register." And with the thumb of his left hand the Dean pointed to Gilliatt, which prevented the necessity of his remembering his name. "The messenger from Mess Lethierry," he added, "has informed me this morning that being too much occupied to come in person, Mess Lethierry desired that the marriage should take place immediately. This desire, expressed verbally, is not sufficient. In consequence of having to grant the license, and of the irregularity which I take upon myself, I cannot proceed so rapidly without informing myself from Mess Lethierry personally, unless some one can produce his signature. Whatever might be my desire to serve you, I cannot be satisfied with a mere message. I must have some written document."

"That need not delay us," said Gilliatt. And he presented a paper to the Dean.

The Dean took it, perused it by a glance, seemed to pass over some lines as unimportant, and read aloud : "Go to the Dean for the license. I wish the marriage to take place as soon as possible. Immediately would be better."

He placed the paper on the table, and proceeded :

"It is signed, Lethierry. It would have been more respectful to have addressed himself to me. But since I am called on to serve a colleague, I ask no more."

Caudray glanced again at Gilliatt. There are moments when mind and mind comprehend each other. Caudray felt that there was some deception ; he had not the strength of purpose, perhaps he had not the idea of revealing it. Whether in obedience to a latent heroism, of which he had begun to obtain a glimpse ; or whether from a deadening of the conscience, arising from the suddenness of

the happiness placed within his reach, he uttered no word.

The Dean took the pen, and aided by the clerk, filled up the spaces in the page of the register ; then he rose, and by a gesture invited Caudray and Déruchette to approach the table.

The ceremony commenced. It was a strange moment. Caudray and Déruchette stood beside each other before the minister. He who has ever dreamed of a marriage in which he himself was chief actor, may conceive something of the feeling which they experienced.

Gilliatt stood at a little distance in the shadow of the pillars.

Déruchette, on rising in the morning, desperate, thinking only of death and its associations, had dressed herself in white. Her attire, which had been associated in her mind with mourning, was suited to her nuptials. A white dress is all that is necessary for the bride.

A ray of happiness was visible upon her face. Never had she appeared more beautiful. Her features were remarkable for prettiness rather than what is called beauty. Their fault, if fault it be, lay in a certain excess of grace. Déruchette in repose, that is, neither disturbed by passion or grief, was graceful above all. The ideal virgin is the transfiguration of a face like this. Déruchette, touched by her sorrow and her love, seemed to have caught that higher and more holy expression. It was the difference between the field daisy and the lily.

The tears had scarcely dried upon her cheeks ; one perhaps still lingered in the midst of her smiles. Traces of tears indistinctly visible form a pleasing but sombre accompaniment of joy.

The Dean, standing near the table, placed his finger upon the open book, and asked in a distinct voice whether they knew of any impediment to their union.

There was no reply.

"Amen !" said the Dean.

Caudray and Déruchette advanced a step or two towards the table.

"Joseph Ebenezer Caudray, wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife ?"

Caudray replied "I will."

The Dean continued :

"Durande Déruchette Lethierry, wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband?"

Déruchette, in an agony of soul, springing from her excess of happiness, murmured rather than uttered—

"I will."

Then followed the beautiful form of the Anglican marriage service. The Dean looked around, and in the twilight of the church uttered the solemn words :

"Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?"

Gilliatt answered, "I do!"

There was an interval of silence. Caudray and Déruchette felt a vague sense of oppression in spite of their joy.

The Dean placed Déruchette's right hand in Caudray's; and Caudray repeated after him :

"I take thee, Durande Déruchette, to be my wedded wife for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part; and thereto I plight thee my troth."

The Dean then placed Caudray's right hand in that of Déruchette, and Déruchette said after him :

"I take thee to be my wedded husband for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness or in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part; and thereto I plight thee my troth."

The Dean asked, "Where is the ring?" The question took them by surprise. Caudray had no ring; but Gilliatt took off the gold ring which he wore upon his little finger. It was probably the wedding-ring which had been sold that morning by the jeweller in the Commercial Arcade.

The Dean placed the ring upon the book; then handed it to Caudray, who took Déruchette's little trembling left hand, passed the ring over her fourth finger, and said :

"With this ring I thee wed!"

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," continued the Dean.

"Amen," said his evangelist.

Then the Dean said, "Let us pray."

Caudray and Déruchette turned towards the table, and knelt down.

Gilliatt, standing by, inclined his head.

So they knelt before God; while he seemed to bend under the burden of his fate.

IV.

"FOR YOUR WIFE WHEN YOU MARRY."

As they left the church they could see the Cashmere making preparations for her departure.

"You are in time," said Gilliatt.

They chose again the path leading to the Havelet.

Caudray and Déruchette went before, Gilliatt this time walking behind them. They were two somnambulists. Their bewilderment had not passed away, but only changed in form. They took no heed of whither they were going, or of what they did. They hurried on mechanically, scarcely remembering the existence of anything, feeling that they were united forever, but scarcely able to connect two ideas in their minds. In ecstasy like theirs it is as impossible to think as it is to swim in a torrent. In the midst of their trouble and darkness they had been plunged in a whirlpool of delight; they bore a paradise within themselves. They did not speak, but conversed with each other by the mysterious sympathy of their souls. Déruchette pressed Caudray's arm to her side.

The footsteps of Gilliatt behind them reminded them now and then that he was there. They were deeply moved, but could find no words. The excess of emotion results in stupor. Theirs was delightful, but overwhelming. They were man and wife: every other idea was postponed to that. What Gilliatt had done was well; that was all that they could grasp. They experienced towards their guide a deep but vague gratitude in their hearts. Déruchette felt that there was some mystery to be explained, but not now. Meanwhile they accepted their unexpected happiness. They felt themselves controlled by the abruptness and decision of this man who conferred on them so

much happiness with a kind of authority. To question him, to talk with him seemed impossible. Too many impressions rushed into their minds at once for that. Their absorption was complete.

Events succeed each other sometimes with the rapidity of hailstones. Their effect is overpowering; they deaden the senses. Falling upon existences habitually calm, they render incidents rapidly unintelligible even to those whom they chiefly concern; we become scarcely conscious of our own adventures; we are overwhelmed without guessing the cause, or crowned with happiness without comprehending it. For some hours Déruchette had been subjected to every kind of emotion: at first, surprise and delight at meeting Caudray in the garden; then horror at the monster whom her uncle had presented as her husband; then her anguish when the angel of her dreams spread his wings and seemed about to depart; and now her joy, a joy such as she had never known before, founded on an inexplicable enigma; the monster of last night himself restoring her lover; marriage arising out of her torture; this Gilliatt, the evil destiny of last night, become to-day her saviour! She could explain nothing to her own mind. It was evident that all the morning Gilliatt had had no other occupation than that of preparing the way for their marriage: he had done all: he had answered for Mess Lethierry, seen the Dean, obtained the license, signed the necessary declaration; and thus the marriage had been rendered possible. But Déruchette understood it not. If she had, she could not have comprehended the reasons. They did nothing but close their eyes to the world, and—grateful in their hearts—yield themselves up to the guidance of this good demon. There was no time for explanations, and expressions of gratitude seemed too insignificant. They were silent in their trance of love.

The little power of thought which they retained was scarcely more than sufficient to guide them on their way—to enable them to distinguish the sea from the land, and the Cashmere from every other vessel.

In a few minutes they were at the little creek.

Caudray entered the boat first. At the moment when Déruchette was about to follow, she felt her sleeve held gently. It was Gilliatt, who had placed his finger upon a fold of her dress.

"Madam," he said, "you are going on a journey unexpectedly. It has struck me that you would have need of dresses and clothes. You will find a trunk aboard the Cashmere, containing a lady's clothing. It came to me from my mother. It was intended for my wife if I should marry. Permit me to ask your acceptance of it."

Déruchette, partially aroused from her dream, turned towards him. Gilliatt continued, in a voice which was scarcely audible:

"I do not wish to detain you, madam, but I feel that I ought to give you some explanation. On the day of your misfortune, you were sitting in the lower room; you uttered certain words; it is easy to understand that you have forgotten them. We are not compelled to remember every word we speak. Mess Lethierry was in great sorrow. It was certainly a noble vessel, and one that did good service. The misfortune was recent; there was a great commotion. Those are things which one naturally forgets. It was only a vessel wrecked among the rocks; one cannot be always thinking of an accident. But what I wished to tell you was, that as it was said that no one would go, I went. They said it was impossible; but it was not. I thank you for listening to me a moment. You can understand, madam, that if I went there, it was not with the thought of displeasing you. This is a thing, besides, of old date. I know that you are in haste. If there was time, if we could talk about this, you might perhaps remember. But this is all useless now. The history of it goes back to a day when there was snow upon the ground. And then on one occasion that I passed you, I thought that you looked kindly on me. This is how it was. With regard to last night, I had not had time to go to my home. I came from my labor; I was all torn and ragged; I startled you, and you

fainted. I was to blame; people do not come like that to strangers' houses; I ask your forgiveness. This is nearly all I had to say. You are about to sail. You will have fine weather; the wind is in the east. Farewell. You will not blame me for troubling you with these things. This is the last minute."

"I am thinking of the trunk you spoke of," replied Déruchette. "Why do you not keep it for your wife, when you marry?"

"It is most likely, madam," replied Gilliatt, "that I shall never marry."

"That would be a pity," said Déruchette; "you are so good."

And Déruchette smiled. Gilliatt returned her smile.

Then he assisted her to step into the boat.

In less than a quarter of an hour afterwards Caudray and Déruchette were aboard the Cashmere in the roads.

V.

THE GREAT TOMB.

GILLIATT walked along the water-side, passed rapidly through St. Peter's Port, and then turned towards St. Sampson by the seashore. In his anxiety to meet no one whom he knew, he avoided the high-ways now filled with foot passengers by his great achievement.

For a long time, as the reader knows, he had had a peculiar manner of traversing the country in all parts without being observed. He knew the bye-paths, and favored solitary and winding routes; he had the shy habits of a wild beast who knows that he is disliked, and keeps at a distance. When quite a child, he had been quick to feel how little welcome men showed in their faces at his approach, and he had gradually contracted that habit of being alone which had since become an instinct.

He passed through the Esplanade, then by the Salerie. Now and then he turned and looked behind him at the Cashmere in the roads, which was beginning to set

her sails. There was little wind; Gilliatt went faster than the Cashmere. He walked with downcast eyes among the lower rocks at the water's edge. The tide was beginning to rise.

Suddenly he stopped, and, turning his back, contemplated for some minutes a group of oaks beyond the rocks which concealed the road to Vale. They were the oaks at the spot called the Basses Maisons. It was there that Déruchette once wrote with her finger the name of Gilliatt in the snow. Many a day had passed since that snow had melted away.

Then he pursued his way.

The day was beautiful; more beautiful than any that had yet been seen that year. It was one of those spring days when May suddenly pours forth all its beauty, and when nature seems to have no thought but to rejoice and be happy. Amidst the many murmurs from forest and village, from the sea and the air, a sound of cooing could be distinguished. The first butterflies of the year were resting on the early roses. Everything in nature seemed new—the grass, the mosses, the leaves, the perfumes, the rays of light. The sun shone as if it had never shone before. The pebbles seemed bathed in coolness. Birds but lately fledged sang out their deep notes from the trees, or fluttered among the boughs in their attempts to use their new-found wings. There was a chattering all together of gold-finches, pewits, tomtits, woodpeckers, bullfinches, and thrushes. The blossoms of lilacs, May lilies, daphnes, and melilots mingled their various hues in the thickets. A beautiful kind of water-weed peculiar to Guernsey covered the pools with an emerald green, where the kingfishers and the water-wagtails, which make such graceful little nests, came down to bathe their wings. Through every opening in the branches appeared the deep blue sky. A few lazy clouds followed each other in the azure depths. The ear seemed to catch the sound of kisses sent from invisible lips. Every old wall had its tufts of wallflowers. The plum-trees and laburnums were in blossom; their white and yellow masses gleamed through the interlacing boughs.

The spring showered all her gold and silver on the woods. The new shoots and leaves were green and fresh. Calls of welcome were in the air; the approaching summer opened her hospitable doors for birds coming from afar. It was the time of the arrival of the swallows. The clusters of furze-bushes bordered the steep sides of hollow roads in anticipation of the clusters of the hawthorn. The pretty and the beautiful reigned side by side; the magnificent and the graceful, the great and the little, had each their place. No note in the great concert of nature was lost. Green microscopic beauties took their place in the vast universal plan in which all seemed distinguishable as in limpid water. Everywhere a divine fulness, a mysterious sense of expansion, suggested the unseen effort of the sap in movement. Glittering things glittered more than ever; loving natures became more tender. There was a hymn in the flowers, and a radiance in the sounds of the air. The wide-diffused harmony of nature burst forth on every side. All things which felt the dawn of life invited others to put forth shoots. A movement coming from below, and also from above, stirred vaguely all hearts susceptible to the scattered and subterranean influence of germination. The flower shadowed forth the fruit; young maidens dreamed of love. It was nature's universal bridal. It was fine, bright, and warm; through the hedges in the meadows children were seen laughing and playing at their games. The fruit-trees filled the orchards with their heaps of white and pink blossom. In the fields were primroses, cowslips, milfoil, daffodils, daises, speedwell, jacinths, and violets. Blue borage and yellow irises swarmed with those beautiful little pink stars which flower always in groups, and are hence called "companions." Creatures with golden scales glided between the stones. The flowering houseleek covered the thatched roofs with purple patches. Women were plaiting hives in the open air; and the bees were abroad, mingling their humming with the murmurs from the sea.

When Gilliatt arrived at St. Sampson,

the water had not yet risen at the further end of the harbor, and he was able to cross it dry-footed unperceived behind the hulls of vessels fixed for repair. A number of flat stones were placed there at regular distances to make a causeway.

He was not observed. The crowd was at the other end of the port, near the narrow entrance, by the Bravées. There his name was in every mouth. They were, in fact, speaking about him so much that none paid attention to him. He passed, sheltered in some degree by the very commotion that he had caused.

He saw from afar the sloop in the place where he had moored it, with the funnel standing between its four chains; observed a movement of carpenters at their work, and confused outlines of figures passing to and fro; and he could distinguish the loud and cheery voice of Mess Lethierry giving orders.

He threaded the narrow alleys behind the Bravées. There was no one there beside him. All curiosity was concentrated on the front of the house. He chose the footpath alongside the low wall of the garden, but stopped at the angle where the wild mallow grew. He saw once more the stone where he used to pass his time; saw once more the wooden garden seat where Déruchette was accustomed to sit, and glanced again at the pathway of the alley where he had seen the embrace of two shadows which had vanished.

He soon went on his way, climbed the hill of Vale Castle, descended again, and directed his steps towards the Bû de la Rue.

The Houmet-Paradis was a solitude.

His house was in the same state in which he had left it in the morning, after dressing himself to go to Saint Peter's Port.

A window was open, through which his bagpipe might have been seen hanging to a nail upon the wall.

Upon the table was the little Bible given to him in token of gratitude by the stranger whom he now knew as Caudray.



HALT.

The key was in the door. He approached; placed his hand upon it; turned it twice in the lock, put the key in his pocket, and departed.

He walked not in the direction of the town, but towards the sea.

He traversed his garden diagonally, taking the shortest way without regard to the beds, but taking care not to tread upon the plants which he placed there, because he had heard that they were favorites with *Déruchette*.

He crossed the parapet wall, and let himself down upon the rocks.

Going straight on, he began to follow the long ridge of rocks which connected the *Bû de la Rue* with the great natural obelisk of granite rising erect from the sea, which was known as the *Beast's Horn*. This was the place of the *Gild-Holm-'Ur* seat.

He strode on from block to block like a giant among mountains. To make long strides upon a row of breakers is like walking upon the ridge of a roof.

A fisherwoman with dredge-nets, who had been walking naked-footed among the pools of sea water at some distance, and had just regained the shore, called to him, "Take care; the tide is coming." But he held on his way.

Having arrived at the great rock of the point, the *Horn*, which rises like a pinnacle from the sea, he stopped. It was the extremity of the promontory..

He looked around.

Out at sea a few sailing boats at anchor were fishing. Now and then rivulets of silver glittered among them in the sun: it was the water running from the nets. The *Cashmere* was not yet off *St. Sampson*. She had set her maintopsail, and was between *Herm* and *Jethou*.

Gilliatt rounded the rock, and came under the *Gild-Holm-'Ur* seat, at the foot of that kind of abrupt stairs where, less than three months before, he had assisted *Caudray* to come down. He ascended.

The greater number of the steps were already under water. Two or three only were still dry, by which he climbed.

The steps led up to the *Gild-Holm-'Ur* seat. He reached the niche, contem-

plated it for a moment, pressed his hand upon his eyes, and let it glide gently from one eyelid to the other—a gesture by which he seemed to obliterate the memory of the past—then sat down in the hollow, with the perpendicular wall behind him, and the ocean at his feet.

The *Cashmere* at that moment was passing the great round half-submerged tower, defended by one sergeant and a cannon, which marks the half way in the roads between *Herm* and *St. Peter's Port*.

A few flowers stirred among the crevices in the rock about *Gilliatt's* head. The sea was blue as far as eye could reach. The wind came from the east; there was a little surf in the direction of the island of *Sark*, of which only the western side is visible from *Guernsey*. In the distance appeared the coast of *France* like a mist, with the long yellow strips of sand about *Carteret*. Now and then a white butterfly fluttered by. The butterflies frequently fly out to sea.

The breeze was very slight. The blue expanse, both above and below, was tranquil. Not a ripple agitated those species of serpents, of an azure more or less dark, which indicate on the surface of the sea the lines of sunken rocks.

The *Cashmere*, little moved by the wind, had set her topsail and studding-sails to catch the breeze. All her canvas was spread, but the wind being a side one, her studding-sails only compelled her to hug the *Guernsey* coast more closely. She had passed the beacon of *St. Sampson*, and was off the hill of *Vale Castle*. The moment was approaching when she would double the point of the *Bû de la Rue*.

Gilliatt watched her approach.

The air and sea were still. The tide rose not by waves, but by an imperceptible swell. The level of the water crept upward without a palpitation. The subdued murmur from the open sea was soft as the breathing of a child.

In the direction of the harbor of *St. Sampson*, faint echoes could be heard of carpenters' hammers. The carpenters were probably the workmen constructing

the tackle, gear, and apparatus for removing the engine from the sloop. The sounds, however, scarcely reached Gilliatt by reason of the mass of granite at his back.

The Cashmere approached with the slowness of a phantom.

Gilliatt watched it still.

Suddenly a touch and a sensation of cold caused him to look down. The sea had reached his feet.

He lowered his eyes, then raised them again.

The Cashmere was quite near.

The rock in which the rains had hollowed out the Gild-Holm-'Ur seat was so completely vertical, and there was so much water at its base, that in calm weather vessels were able to pass without danger within a few cables' lengths.

The Cashmere was abreast of the rock. It rose straight upwards as if it had grown out of the water; or like the lengthening out of a shadow. The rigging showed black against the heavens and in the magnificent expanse of the sea. The long sails, passing for a moment over the sun, became lighted up with a singular glory and transparency. The water murmured indistinctly; but no other noise marked the majestic gliding of that outline. The deck was as visible as if he had stood upon it.

The steersman was at the helm; a cabin-boy was climbing the shrouds; a few passengers leaning on the bulwarks were contemplating the beauty of the scene. The captain was smoking; but nothing of all this was seen by Gilliatt.

There was a spot on the deck on which the broad sunlight fell. It was on this corner that his eyes were fixed. In this sunlight were Déruchette and Caudray. They were sitting together side by side, like two birds, warming themselves in the noonday sun, upon one of those covered seats with a little awning which well-ordered packet-boats provided for passengers, and upon which was the inscription, when it happened to be an English vessel, "For ladies only." Déruchette's head was leaning upon Caudray's shoulder; his arm was around her waist; they held

each other's hands with their fingers interwoven. A celestial light was discernible in those two faces formed by innocence. Their chaste embrace was expressive of their earthly union and their purity of soul. The seat was a sort of alcove, almost a nest; it was at the same time a glory round them; the tender aureola of love passing into a cloud.

The silence was like the calm of heaven.

Caudray's gaze was fixed in contemplation. Déruchette's lips moved; and, amidst that perfect silence, as the wind carried the vessel near the shore, and it glided within a few fathoms of the Gild-Holm-'Ur seat, Gilliatt heard the tender and musical voice of Déruchette exclaiming:

"Look yonder. It seems as if there were a man upon the rock."

The vessel passed.

Leaving the promontory of the Bû de la Rue behind, the Cashmere glided on upon the waters. In less than a quarter of an hour, her masts and sails formed only a white obelisk, gradually decreasing against the horizon. Gilliatt felt that the water had reached his knees.

He contemplated the vessel speeding on her way.

The breeze freshened out at sea. He could see the Cashmere run out her lower studding-sails and her staysails, to take advantage of the rising wind. She was already clear of the waters of Guernsey. Gilliatt followed the vessel with his eyes.

The waves had reached his waist.

The tide was rising: time was passing away.

The sea-mews and cormorants flew about him restlessly, as if anxious to warn him of his danger. It seemed as if some of his old companions of the Douvres rocks flying there had recognized him.

An hour had passed.

The wind from the sea was scarcely felt in the roads; but the form of the Cashmere was rapidly growing less. The sloop, according to all appearance, was sailing fast. It was already nearly off the Casquets.

There was no foam around the Gild-Holm-'Ur; no wave beat against its granite sides. The water rose peacefully. It was nearly level with Gilliatt's shoulders.

Another hour had passed.

The Cashmere was beyond the waters of Aurigny. The Ortach rock concealed it for a moment; it passed behind it, and came forth again as from an eclipse. The sloop was veering to the north upon the open sea. It was now only a point glittering in the sun.

The birds were hovering about Gilliatt, uttering short cries. Only his head was now visible. The tide was nearly at the full. Evening was approaching. Behind him, in the roads, a few fishing-boats were making for the harbor.

Gilliatt's eyes continued fixed upon the vessel in the horizon. Their expression

resembled nothing earthly. A strange lustre shone in their calm and tragic depths. There was in them the peace of vanished hopes, the calm but sorrowful acceptance of an end far different from his dreams. By degrees the dusk of heaven began to darken in them, though gazing still upon the point in space. At the same moment the wide waters round the Gild-Holm-'Ur and the vast gathering twilight closed upon them.

The Cashmere, now scarcely perceptible, had become a mere spot in the thin haze.

Gradually, the spot, which was but a shape, grew paler.

Then it dwindled, and finally disappeared.

At the moment when the vessel vanished on the line of the horizon, the head of Gilliatt disappeared. Nothing was visible now but the sea.

END OF "TOILERS OF THE SEA."

NINETY-THREE.

NINETY-THREE.

PART THE FIRST.

AT SEA.

BOOK THE FIRST.

THE WOOD OF LA SAUDRAIE.

DURING the last days of May, 1793, one of the Parisian regiments thrown into Brittany by Santerre reconnoitred the dreaded wood of La Saudraie in Astillé. There were not more than three hundred men, for the battalion had been well-nigh swept off by this fierce war. It was the period when, after Argonne, Jemmapes, and Valmy, of the first regiment of Paris, which had numbered six hundred volunteers, there remained twenty-seven men; of the second, thirty-three; and of the third, fifty-seven. It was a time of epic conflict.

The regiments dispatched from Paris into Vendée counted nine hundred and twelve men. Each regiment took with it three pieces of cannon. They had been quickly put on foot. On the 25th of April, Gohier being minister of justice and Bouchotte minister of war, the section of the Bon Conseil proposed sending battalions of volunteers into Vendée. Lubin, member of the commune, made the report. On the 1st of May, Santerre was ready to marshal

twelve thousand soldiers, thirty field-pieces, and a troop of gunners. These battalions, formed so quickly, were formed so well that they serve as models to-day; regiments of the line are constructed after their model; they changed the old proportion between the number of soldiers and non-commissioned officers.

On the 28th of April the commune of Paris gave this password to the volunteers of Santerre: *No mercy; no quarter.* At the end of May, of the twelve thousand who left Paris, eight thousand were dead.

The regiment engaged in the wood of La Saudraie held itself on the watch. There was no appearance of haste. Each man looked at once to the right and to the left, before and behind. Kleber has said, "*A soldier has an eye in his back.*" They had been on foot for a long while. What time could it be? What period of the day was it? It would have been difficult to say, for there is always a sort of dusk in such savage thickets, and it was never light in that wood.

The forest of La Saudraie was tragic. It was in its copses that, from the month of November, 1792, civil war commenced its crimes. Mousqueton, the ferocious cripple, came out of its fatal shades. The list of the murders that had been committed there was enough to make one's hair stand on end. There was no place more to be dreaded. The soldiers moved

cautiously forward. The depths were full of flowers; on each side was a trembling wall of branches and dew-wet leaves. Here and there rays of sunlight pierced the green shadows. The gladiola, that flame of the marshes, the meadow narcissus, the little wood daisy, harbinger of spring, and the vernal crocus,* embroidered the thick carpet of vegetation, crowded with every form of moss, from that resembling velvet (*chenille*) to that which looks like a star. The soldiers advanced in silence, step by step, pushing the brushwood softly aside. The birds twittered above the bayonets.

In former peaceable times La Saudraie was a favorite place for the *Houiche-ba*, the hunting of birds by night; now they hunted men there.

The thicket was one of birch-trees, beeches, and oaks; the ground flat; the thick moss and grass deadened the sound of the men's steps; there were no paths, or only blind ones, which quickly disappeared among the holly, wild sloes, ferns, hedges of rest-harrow, and high brambles. It would have been impossible to distinguish a man ten steps off.

Now and then a heron or a moor-hen flew through the branches, indicating the neighborhood of marches.

They pushed forward. They went at random, with uneasiness, fearing to find that which they sought.

From time to time they came upon traces of encampments; burned spots, trampled grass, sticks arranged cross-wise, branches stained with blood. Here soup had been made—there, mass had been said—yonder they had dressed their wounds. But all human things had disappeared. Where were they? Very far off, perhaps; perhaps quite near, hidden,

blunderbuss in hand. The wood seemed deserted. The regiment redoubled its prudence. Solitude—hence distrust. They saw no one: so much more reason for fearing some one. They had to do with a forest with a bad name. An ambush was probable.

Thirty grenadiers, detached as scouts, and commanded by a sergeant, marched at a considerable distance in front of the main body; the vivandière of the battalion accompanied them. The vivandières willingly join the vanguard; they run risks, but they have the chance of seeing whatever happens. Curiosity is one of the forms of feminine bravery.

Suddenly the soldiers of this little advance party started like hunters who have neared the hiding place of their prey. They had heard something like a breathing from the centre of a thicket, and seemed to perceive a movement among the branches. The soldiers made signals.

In the species of watch and search confided to scouts, the officers have small need to interfere; the right thing seems done by instinct.

In less than a minute the spot where the movement had been noticed was surrounded; a line of pointed muskets encircled it; the obscure centre of the thicket was covered on all sides at the same instant; the soldiers, finger on trigger, eye on the suspected spot, only waited for the sergeant's order. Notwithstanding this, the vivandière ventured to peer through the underbrush, and at the moment when the sergeant was about to cry "Fire!" this woman cried, "Halt!"

Turning toward the soldiers, she added—"Do not fire, comrades!"

She plunged into the thicket; the men followed.

* The gladiola is with us an autumnal, the crocus a spring flower.—*Trans.*

There was, in truth, some one there.

In the thickest of the brake, on the edge of one of those little round clearings left by the fires of the charcoal-burners, in a sort of recess among the branches—a kind of chamber of foliage—half open like an alcove—a woman was seated on the moss, holding to her breast a nursing babe, while the fair heads of two sleeping children rested on her knees.

This was the ambush.

“What are you doing here, you?” cried the vivandière.

The woman lifted her head.

The vivandière added furiously, “Are you mad, that you are there? A little more and you would have been blown to pieces!” Then she addressed herself to the soldiers—“It is a woman.”

“Well, that is plain to be seen,” said a grenadier.

The vivandière continued: “To come into the wood to get yourself massacred! The idea of such stupidity!”

The woman, stunned, petrified with fear, looked about like one in a dream at these guns, these sabres, these bayonets, these savage faces.

The two children awoke, and cried:

“I am hungry,” said the first.

“I am afraid,” said the other.

The baby was still suckling; the vivandière addressed it. “You are in the right of it,” said she.

The mother was dumb with terror. The sergeant cried out to her—“Do not be afraid; we are the battalion of the *Bonnet Rouge*.”

The woman trembled from head to foot. She stared at the sergeant, of whose rough visage there was nothing visible but the moustaches, the brows, and two burning coals for eyes.

“Formerly the battalion of the Red Cross,” added the vivandière.

The sergeant continued: “Who are you, madame?”

The woman scanned him, terrified. She was slender, young, pale, and in rags; she wore the large hood and woollen cloak of the Breton peasant, fastened about her neck by a string. She left her bosom exposed with the indifference of an animal. Her feet, shoeless and stockingless, were bleeding.

“It is a beggar,” said the sergeant.

The vivandière began anew, in a voice at once soldierly and feminine, but sweet: “What is your name?”

The woman stammered so that she was scarcely intelligible — “Michelle Fléchard.”

The vivandière stroked the little head of the sleeping babe with her large hand. “What is the age of this mite?” demanded she.

The mother did not understand. The vivandière persisted: “I ask you how old is it?”

“Ah!” said the mother; “eighteen months.”

“It is old,” said the vivandière; “it ought not to suckle any longer. You must wean it; we will give it soup.”

The mother began to feel a certain confidence; the two children, who had awakened, were rather curious than scared—they admired the plumes of the soldiers.

“Ah!” said the mother, “they are very hungry.” Then she added—“I have no more milk.”

“We will give them something to eat,” cried the sergeant; “and you, too. But that’s not all. What are your political opinions?”

The woman looked at him, but did not reply.

“Did you hear my question?”

She stammered—“I was put into a con-

vent very young—but I am married—I am not a nun. The sisters taught me to speak French. The village was set on fire. We ran away so quickly that I had not time to put on my shoes."

"I ask you what are your political opinions?"

"I don't know what that means."

The sergeant continued: "There are such things as female spies. We shoot spies. Come—speak! You are not a gipsy? Which is your side?"

She still looked at him as if she did not understand.

The sergeant repeated—"Which is your side?"

"I do not know," she said.

"How? You do not know your own country?"

"Ah, my country! Oh yes, I know that."

"Well, where is it?"

The woman replied, "The farm of Siscoignard, in the parish of Azé."

It was the sergeant's turn to be stupefied. He remained thoughtful for a moment, then resumed: "You say—?"

"Siscoignard."

"That is not a country."

"It is my country," said the woman; and added, after an instant's reflection, "I understand, sir. You are from France; I belong to Brittany."

"Well?"

"It is not the same neighborhood."

"But it is the same country," cried the sergeant.

The woman only repeated, "I am from Siscoignard."

"Siscoignard, be it," returned the sergeant. "Your family belong there?"

"Yes."

"What is their occupation?"

"They are all dead; I have nobody left."

The sergeant, who thought himself a fine talker, continued his interrogatories: "What? the devil! One has relations, or one has had! Who are you? Speak!"

The woman listened, astounded by this—"Or one has had!" which was more like the growl of an animal than any human sound.

The vivandière felt the necessity of interfering. She began again to caress the babe, and to pat the cheeks of the two other children.

"How do you call the baby?" she asked. "It is a little girl—this one?"

The mother replied, "Georgette."

"And the eldest fellow? For he is a man, the small rascal!"

"René-Jean."

"And the younger? He is a man, too, and chubby-faced into the bargain."

"Gros-Alain," said the mother.

"They are pretty little fellows," said the vivandière; "they already look as if they were somebody!"

Still the sergeant persisted. "Now speak, madame! Have you a house?"

"I had one."

"Where was it?"

"At Azé."

"Why are you not in your house?"

"Because they burned it."

"Who?"

"I do not know—a battle."

"Where did you come from?"

"From there."

"Where are you going?"

"I don't know."

"Get to the facts! Who are you?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know who you are?"

"We are people who are running away."

"What party do you belong to?"

"I don't know."

"Are you Blues? Are you Whites? Who are you with?"

"I am with my children."

There was a pause. The vivandière said, "As for me, I have no children; I have not had time."

The sergeant began again: "But your parents? See here, madame! give us the facts about your parents. My name is Radoub; I am a sergeant, from the street of Cherche Midi; my father and mother belonged there. I can talk about my parents; tell us about yours. Who were they?"

"Their name was Fléchard—that is all."

"Yes; the Fléchards are the Fléchards, just as the Radoubs are the Radoubs. But people have a calling. What was your parents' calling? What was their business, these Fléchards of yours?"*

"They were laborers. My father was sickly, and could not work on account of a beating that the lord—his lord—our lord—had given to him. It was a kindness, for my father had poached a rabbit—a thing for which one was condemned to death—but the lord showed him mercy, and said, 'You need only give him a hundred blows with a stick;' and my father was left crippled."

"And then?"

"My grandfather was a Huguenot. The curé had him sent to the galleys. I was very little at the time."

"And then?"

"My husband's father smuggled salt. The king had him hung."

"And your husband—what did he do?"

"Latently he fought."

"For whom?"

"For the king."

"And afterwards?"

"Well, for his lordship."

"And next?"

"Well, then for the curé."

"A thousand names of brutes!" cried a grenadier.

The woman gave a start of terror.

"You see, madame, we are Parisians," said the vivandière, graciously.

The woman clasped her hands, and exclaimed, "Oh, my God and Blessed Lord!"

"No superstitious ejaculations!" growled the sergeant.

The vivandière seated herself by the woman, and drew the eldest child between her knees. He submitted quietly. Children show confidence as they do distrust, without any apparent reason; some internal monitor warns them.

"My poor, good woman of this neighborhood," said the vivandière, "your brats are very pretty—babies are always that. I can guess their ages. The big one is four years old; his brother is three. Upon my word, the little sucking poppet is a greedy one! Oh, the monster! Will you stop eating up your mother? See here, madame, do not be afraid. You ought to join the battalion—do like me. I call myself Houzarde. It is a nickname; but I like Houzarde better than being called Mamzelle Bicornéau, like my mother. I am the canteen woman; that is the same as saying, she who offers drink when they are firing and stabbing. Our feet are about the same size. I will give you a pair of my shoes. I was in Paris the 10th of August. I gave Westermann drink too. How things went! I saw Louis XVI. guillotined — Louis Capet, as they call him. It was against his will. Only just listen, now! To think that the 13th of January he roasted chest-nuts and laughed with his family. When they forced him down on the see-saw, as they say, he had neither coat nor shoes,

*How did they flesh themselves these flesh-hards? The sergeant makes a pun. Fléchard, our Fletcher, is an arrow-maker.—*Trans*

nothing but his shirt, a quilted waistcoat, gray cloth breeches, and gray silk stockings. I saw that, I did! The hackney-coach they brought him in was painted green. See here; come with us; the battalion are good fellows; you shall be can-teen number two; I will teach you the business. Oh, it is very simple! You have your can and your handbell; away you go into the hubbub, with the platoons firing, the cannon thundering—into the thickest of the row—and you cry, ‘Who’ll have a drop to drink, my children?’ It’s no more trouble than that. I give everybody and anybody a sup—yes, indeed—Whites the same as Blues, though I am a Blue myself, and a good Blue, too; but I serve them all alike. Wounded men are all thirsty. They die without any difference of opinions. Dying fellows ought to shake hands. How silly it is to go fighting! Do you come with us. If I am killed, you will step into my place. You see I am only so-so to look at; but I am a good woman, and a brave chap. Don’t you be afraid.”

When the vivandière ceased speaking, the woman murmured, “Our neighbor was called Marie Jeanne, and our servant was named Marie Claude.”

In the mean time the sergeant reprimanded the grenadier: “Hold your tongue! You frighten madame. One does not swear before ladies.”

“All the same, it is a downright butchery for an honest man to hear about,” replied the grenadier; “and to see Chinese Iroquois, that have had their fathers-in-law crippled by a lord, their grandfathers sent to the galleys by the priest, and their fathers hung by the king, and who fight—name of the little Black Man!—and mix themselves up with revolts, and get smashed for his lordship, the priest, and the king!”

“Silence in the ranks!” cried the sergeant.

“A man may hold his tongue, sergeant,” returned the grenadier; “but that doesn’t hinder the fact that it’s a pity to see a pretty woman like this running the risk of getting her neck broken for the sake of a dirty robber.”

“Grenadier,” said the sergeant, “we are not in the Pike-club of Paris—no eloquence!” He turned toward the woman—“And your husband, madame? What is he at? What has become of him?”

“There hasn’t anything become of him, because they killed him.”

“Where did that happen?”

“In the hedge.”

“When?”

“Three days ago.”

“Who did it?”

“I don’t know.”

“How? You do not know who killed your husband?”

“No.”

“Was it a Blue? Was it a White?”

“It was a bullet.”

“Three days ago?”

“Yes.”

“In what direction?”

“Toward Ernée. My husband fell. That is all!”

“And what have you been doing since your husband was killed?”

“I bear away my children.”

“Where are you taking them?”

“Straight ahead.”

“Where do you sleep?”

“On the ground.”

“What do you eat?”

“Nothing.”

The sergeant made that military grimace which makes the moustache touch the nose.

“Nothing?”

“That is to say, sloes and dried berries

left from last year, myrtle seeds, and fern shoots."

"Faith! you might as well say nothing."

The eldest of the children, who seemed to understand, said, "I am hungry."

The sergeant took a bit of regulation bread from his pocket, and handed it to the mother. She broke the bread into two fragments, and gave them to the children, who ate with avidity.

"She has kept none for herself," grumbled the sergeant.

"Because she is not hungry," said a soldier.

"Because she is a mother," said the sergeant.

The children interrupted the dialogue. "I want to drink," cried one. "I want to drink," repeated the other.

"Is there no brook in this devil's wood?" asked the sergeant.

The vivandière took the brass cup which hung at her belt beside her hand-bell, turned the cock of the can she carried slung over her shoulder, poured a few drops into the cup, and held it to the children's lips in turn.

The first drank and made a grimace. The second drank and spat it out.

"Nevertheless it is good," said the vivandière.

"Is it some of the old cut-throat?" asked the sergeant.

"Yes, and the best; but these are peasants." And she wiped her cup.

The sergeant resumed: "And so, madame, you are trying to escape?"

"There is nothing else left for me to do!"

"Across fields—going whichever way chance directs?"

"I run with all my might—then I walk—then I fall."

"Poor villager!" said the vivandière.

"The people fight," stammered the woman. "They are shooting all around me. I do not know what it is they wish. They killed my husband; that is all I understood."

The sergeant grounded the butt of his musket till the earth rang, and cried, "What a beast of a war—in the hangman's name!"

The woman continued: "Last night we slept in an *émousse*."

"All four?"

"All four."

"Slept?"

"Slept."

"Then," said the sergeant, "you slept standing." He turned toward the soldiers—"Comrades, what these savages call an *émousse* is an old hollow tree-trunk that a man may fit himself into as if it were a sheath. But what would you? We can not all be Parisians."

"Slept in a hollow tree?" exclaimed the vivandière. "And with three children!"

"And," added the sergeant, "when the little ones howled, it must have been odd to anybody passing by and seeing nothing whatever, to hear a tree cry, 'Papa! mamma!'"

"Luckily it is summer," sighed the woman. She looked down upon the ground in silent resignation, her eyes filled with the bewilderment of wretchedness. The soldiers made a silent circle round this group of misery. A widow, three orphans; flight, abandonment, solitude, war muttering around the horizon, hunger, thirst; no other nourishment than the herbs of the field, no other roof than that of heaven.

The sergeant approached the woman, and fixed his eye on the sucking baby. The little one left the breast, turned its head gently, gazing with its beautiful

blue orbs into the formidable hairy face, bristling and wild, which bent toward it, and began to smile.

The sergeant raised himself, and they saw a great tear roll down his cheek and cling like a pearl to the end of his moustache. He lifted his voice :

"Comrades, from all this I conclude that the regiment is going to become a father. Is it agreed? We adopt these three children?"

"Hurrah for the Republic!" chorused the grenadiers.

"It is decided!" said the sergeant. He stretched his two hands above the mother and her babes. "Behold the children of the battalion of the *Bonnet Rouge*!"

The vivandière leaped for joy. "Three heads under one bonnet!" cried she. Then she burst into sobs, embraced the poor widow wildly, and said to her, "What a rogue the little girl looks already!"

"*Vive la République!*" repeated the soldiers.

And the sergeant said to the mother, "Come, citizeness!"

BOOK THE SECOND.

THE CORVETTE "CLAYMORE."

CHAPTER I.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE IN CONCERT.

In the spring of 1793, at the moment when France, simultaneously attacked on all its frontiers, suffered the pathetic distraction of the downfall of the Girondists, this was what happened in the Channel Islands.

At Jersey, on the evening of the 1st of June, about an hour before sunset, a corvette set sail from the solitary little Bay of Bonnenuit, in that kind of foggy weather which is favorable to flight because pursuit is rendered dangerous. The vessel was manned by a French crew, though it made part of the English fleet stationed on the look-out at the eastern point of the island. The Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, who was of the house of Bouillon, commanded the English flotilla, and it was by his orders, and for an urgent and special service, that the corvette had been detached.

This vessel, entered at Trinity House under the name of the *Claymore*, had the appearance of a transport or trader, but was in reality a war corvette. She had the heavy, pacific look of a merchantman, but it would not have been safe to trust to that. She had been built for a double purpose—cunning and strength: to deceive if possible, to fight if necessary. For the service before her this night, the lading of the lower deck had been replaced by thirty carronades of heavy calibre. Either because a storm was feared, or because it was desirable to prevent the vessel having a suspicious appearance, these carronades were housed—that is to say, securely fastened within by triple chains, and the hatches above shut close. Nothing was to be seen from without. The ports were blinded; the slides closed; it was as if the corvette had put on a mask. Armed corvettes only carry guns on the upper deck; but this one, built for surprise and cunning, had the deck free, and was able, as we have just seen, to carry a battery below. The *Claymore* was after a heavy, squat model, but a good sailor, nevertheless—the hull of the most solid sort used in the English navy; and in battle was almost as valuable as a frig-

ate, though for mizzen she had only a small mast of brigantine rig. Her rudder, of a peculiar and scientific form, had a curved frame, of unique shape, which cost fifty pounds sterling in the dock-yards of Southampton. The crew, all French, was composed of refugee officers and deserter sailors. They were tried men; not one but was a good sailor, good soldier, and good royalist. They had a threefold fanaticism—for ship, sword, and king. A half-regiment of marines, that could be disembarked in case of need, was added to the crew.

The corvette *Claymore* had as captain a chevalier of Saint Louis, Count du Boisberthelot, one of the best officers of the old Royal Navy; for second, the Chevalier La Vieuville, who had commanded a company of French guards in which Hoche was sergeant; and for pilot, Philip Gacquoil, the most skillful mariner in Jersey.

It was evident that the vessel had unusual business on hand. Indeed, a man who had just come on board had the air of one entering upon an adventure. He was a tall old man, upright and robust, with a severe countenance; whose age it would have been difficult to guess accurately, for he seemed at once old and young; one of those men who are full of years and of vigor; who have white hair on their heads and lightning in their glance; forty in point of energy and eighty in power and authority.

As he came on deck his sea-cloak blew open, exposing his large, loose breeches and top-boots, and a goat-skin vest which had one side tanned and embroidered with silk, while on the other the hair was left rough and bristling—a complete costume of the Breton peasant. These old-fashioned jackets answered alike for working and holidays: they could be turned to

show the hairy or embroidered side, as one pleased; goat-skin all the week, gala accoutrements on Sunday.

As if to increase a resemblance which had been carefully studied, the peasant dress worn by the old man was thread-bare at the knees and elbows, and seemed to have been long in use, while his coarse cloak might have belonged to a fisherman. He had on his head the round hat of the period—high, with a broad rim which, when turned down, gave the wearer a rustic look, but took a military air when fastened up at the side with a loop and a cockade. The old man wore his hat with the brim flattened forward, peasant fashion, without either tassels or cockade.

Lord Balcarras, the governor of the island, and the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, had in person conducted and installed him on board. The secret agent of the princes, Gélambre, formerly one of the Count d'Artois' body-guard, had superintended the arrangement of the cabin; and, although himself a nobleman, pushed courtesy and respect so far as to walk behind the old man carrying his portmanteau. When they left him to go ashore again, Monsieur de Gélambre saluted the peasant profoundly; Lord Balcarras said to him, "Good luck, general!" and the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne added, "*Au revoir*, my cousin!"

"The peasant" was the name by which the crew immediately designated their passenger during the short dialogues which seamen hold; but, without understanding further about the matter, they comprehended that he was no more a peasant than the corvette was a common sloop.

There was little wind. The *Claymore* left Bonnenuit, and passed in front of Boulay Bay, and was for some time in sight, tacking to windward; then she lessened in

the gathering night, and finally disappeared.

An hour after, Gélambre, having returned to his house at Saint Helier, sent by the Southampton express the following lines to the Count d'Artois, at the Duke of York's headquarters: "Monseigneur, —The departure has just taken place. Success certain. In eight days the whole coast will be on fire from Granville to Saint Malo."

Four days previous, Prieur, the representative of Marne, on a mission to the army along the coast of Cherbourg, and momentarily residing at Granville, had received by a secret emissary this message, written in the same hand as the dispatch above:

"Citizen Representative,—On the 1st of June, at the hour when the tide serves, the war corvette *Claymore*, with a masked battery, will set sail for the purpose of landing upon the shore of France a man of whom this is a description: tall, old, white hair, peasant's dress, hands of an aristocrat. I will send you more details to-morrow. He will land on the morning of the 2d. Warn the cruisers; capture the corvette; guillotine the man."

CHAPTER II.

NIGHT ON THE VESSEL AND WITH THE PASSENGER.

THE corvette, instead of going south and making for Saint Catherine's, headed north, then veered to the west, and resolutely entered the arm of the sea, between Sark and Jersey, called the Passage de la Deronte. At that time there was no light-house upon any point along either coast. The sun had set clear; the night was dark

—darker than summer nights ordinarily are; there was a moon, but vast clouds, rather of the equinox than the solstice, veiled the sky, and according to all appearance the moon would not be visible till she touched the horizon at the moment of setting. A few clouds hung low upon the water and covered it with mist.

All this obscurity was favorable.

The intention of Pilot Gacquoil was to leave Jersey on the left and Guernsey on the right, and to gain, by bold sailing between the Hanois and the Douvree, some bay of the Saint Malo shore—a route less short than that by the Minquiers, but safer, as the French cruisers had standing orders to keep an especially keen watch between Saint Helier and Granville. If the wind were favorable, and nothing occurred, Gacquoil hoped by setting all sail to touch the French coast at daybreak.

All went well. The corvette had passed Groz-Nez. Toward nine o'clock the weather looked sulky, as sailors say, and there were wind and sea, but the wind was good and the sea strong without being violent. Still, now and then the waves swept the vessel's bows.

The "peasant," whom Lord Balcarras had called "General," and whom the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne addressed as "My cousin," had a sailor's footing, and paced the deck with tranquil gravity. He did not even seem to notice that the corvette rocked considerably. From time to time he took a cake of chocolate out of his pocket and munched a morsel: his white hair did not prevent his having all his teeth.

He spoke to no one, except now and then a few low, quick words to the captain, who listened with deference, and seemed to consider his passenger, rather than himself, the commander.

The *Claymore*, ably piloted, skirted un-



perceived in the fog the long escarpment north of Jersey, hugging the shore on account of the formidable reef Pierres de Leeq, which is in the middle of the channel between Jersey and Sark. Gacquoil, standing at the helm, signaled in turn the Grève de Leeq, Gros-Nez, and Plémont, and slipped the corvette along among this chain of reefs, feeling his way to a certain extent, but with certitude, like a man familiar with the course and acquainted with the disposition of the sea. The corvette had no light forward, from a fear of betraying its passage through these guarded waters. The fog was a cause for rejoicing. They reached the Grande Étaque. The mist was so thick that the outlines of the lofty pinnacle could scarcely be made out. Ten o'clock was heard to sound from the belfry of Saint Ouen, a proof that the wind was still abaft. All was yet going well. The sea grew rougher on account of the neighborhood of La Corbière.

A little after ten, Count du Boisberthelot and the Chevalier La Vieuville reconducted the man in the peasant's garb to his cabin, which was in reality the captain's state-room. As he went in, he said to them in a low voice:

"Gentlemen, you understand the importance of secrecy. Silence up to the moment of explosion. You two are the only ones here who know my name."

"We will carry it with us to the tomb," replied Boisberthelot.

"As for me," added the old man, "were I in face of death, I would not tell it."

He entered his cabin.

CHAPTER III.

NOBLE AND PLEBEIAN IN CONCERT.

THE commander and the second officer returned on deck and walked up and down, side by side, in conversation. They were evidently talking of their passenger, and this was the dialogue which the wind dispersed among the shadows.

Boisberthelot grumbled in a half-voice in the ear of La Vieuville, "We shall see if he is really a leader."

La Vieuville replied, "In the meantime he is a prince."

"Almost."

"Nobleman in France, but prince in Brittany."

"Like the La Trémoilles; like the Rohans."

"With whom he is connected."

Boisberthelot resumed:

"In France, and in the king's carriages, he is marquis, as I am count, and you are chevalier."

"The carriages are far off!" cried La Vieuville. "We have got to the tumbril."

There was a silence.

Boisberthelot began again: "For lack of a French prince, a Breton one is taken."

"For lack of thrushes—no, for want of an eagle—a crow is chosen."

"I should prefer a vulture," said Boisberthelot.

And La Vieuville retorted, "Yes, indeed! a beak and talons."

"We shall see."

"Yes," resumed La Vieuville, "it is time there was a head. I am of Tinteniak's opinion—'A true chief, and—gunpowder!' See, commander; I know nearly all the leaders, possible and impossible—those of yesterday, those of to-day, and those of to-morrow: there

is not one with the sort of head-piece we need. In that accursed Vendée it wants a general who is a lawyer at the same time. He must worry the enemy, dispute every mill, thicket, ditch, pebble; quarrel with him; take advantage of everything; see to everything; slaughter plentifully; make examples; be sleepless, pitiless. At this hour there are heroes among that army of peasants, but there are no captains. D'Elbée is *nil*; Lescure is ailing; Bonchampe shows mercy—he is kind, that means stupid; La Rochejacquelein is a magnificent sub-lieutenant; Silz an officer for open country, unfit for a war of expedients; Cathelineau is a simple carter; Stofflet is a cunning game-keeper; Bérard is inept; Boulainvilliers is ridiculous; Charette is shocking. And I do not speak of the barber Gaston. For, in the name of Mars, what is the good of opposing the Revolution, and what is the difference between the republicans and ourselves, if we set hairdressers to command noblemen?"

"You see that beast of a Revolution has infected us also."

"An itch that France has caught."

"An itch of the Third Estate," replied Boisberthelot. "It is only England that can cure us of it."

"And she will cure us, do not doubt it, captain."

"In the meanwhile it is ugly."

"Indeed, yes. Clowns everywhere? The monarchy which has Stofflet for commander-in-chief and De Maulevrier for lieutenant, has nothing to envy in the republic that has for minister Pache, son of the Duke de Castries' porter. What men this Vendean war brings out against each other! On one side Santerre the brewer, on the other Gaston the wig-maker!"

"My dear Vieuville, I have a certain

respect for Gaston. He did not conduct himself ill in his command of Gueménée. He very neatly shot three hundred Blues, after making them dig their own graves."

"Well and good; but I could have done that as well as he."

"Zounds! no doubt; and I also."

"The great acts of war," resumed La Vieuville, "require to be undertaken by noblemen. They are matters for knights and not hairdressers."

"Still there are some estimable men among this 'Third Estate,'" returned Boisberthelot. "Take, for example, Joby the clockmaker. He had been a sergeant in a Flanders regiment; he gets himself made a Vendean chief; he commands a coast band; he has a son who is a Republican, and while the father serves among the Whites, the son serves among the Blues. Encounter. Battle. The father takes the son prisoner, and blows out his brains."

"He's a good one," said La Vieuville.

"A Royalist Brutus," replied Boisberthelot.

"All that does not hinder the fact that it is insupportable to be commanded by a Coquereau, a Jean-Jean, a Mouline, a Focart, a Bouju, a Chouppes!"

"My dear chevalier, the other side is equally disgusted. We are full of plebeians—they are full of nobles. Do you suppose the *sans-culottes* are content to be commanded by the Count de Candaux, the Viscount de Miranda, the Viscount de Beauharnais, the Count de Valence, the Marquis de Custine, and the Duke de Biron!"

"What a hash!"

"And the Duke de Chartres!"

"Son of Égalité. Ah, then, when will he ever be king?"

"Never."

"He mounts toward the throne. He is aided by his crimes."

"And held back by his vices," said Boisberthelot.

There was silence again; then Boisberthelot continued:

"Still he tried to bring about a reconciliation. He went to see the king. I was at Versailles when somebody spat on his back."

"From the top of the grand staircase?"

"Yes."

"It was well done."

"We call him Bourbon the Bourbeux."

"He is bald; he has pimples; he is a regicide—poh!"

Then La Vieuville added, "I was at Onessant with him."

"On the *Saint Esprit*?"

"Yes."

"If he had obeyed the signal that the Admiral d'Orvilliers made him, to keep to the windward, he would have kept the English from passing."

"Certainly."

"Is it true that he was hidden at the bottom of the hold?"

"No; but it must be said all the same."

And La Vieuville burst out laughing.

Boisberthelot observed, "There are idiots enough! Hold! that Boulainvilliers you were speaking of, La Vieuville. I knew him. I had a chance of studying him. In the beginning, the peasants were armed with pikes: if he did not get it into his head to make pikemen of them! He wanted to teach them the manual of exercise, *'de la pique-en-biais et de la pique-trainante-le-fer-dévant.'* He dreamed of transforming those savages into soldiers of the line. He proposed to show them how to mass battalions and form hollow squares. He jabbered the old-fashioned military dialect to them; for chief of a squad, he said *un cap d'escade*, which was

the appellation of corporals under Louis XIV. He persisted in forming a regiment of those poachers: he had regular companies. The sergeants ranged themselves in a circle every evening to take the countersign from the colonel's sergeant, who whispered it to the sergeant of the lieutenants; he repeated it to his neighbor, and he to the man nearest; and so on, from ear to ear, down to the last. He cashiered an officer because he did not stand bareheaded to receive the watchword from the sergeant's mouth. You can fancy how all succeeded. The booby could not understand that peasants must be led peasant fashion, and that one can not make drilled soldiers out of woodchoppers. Yes, I knew that Boulainvilliers."

They moved on a few steps, each pursuing his own thoughts. Then the conversation was renewed.

"By the way, is it true that Dampierre is killed?"

"Yes, commander."

"Before Condé?"

"At the camp of Pamars—by a gunshot."

Boisberthelot sighed. "The Count de Dampierre. Yet another of ours who went over to them!"

"A good journey to him," said La Vieuville.

"And the princesses—where are they?"

"At Trieste."

"Still?"

"Still. Ah, this republic!" cried Vieuville. "What havoc from such slight consequences! When one thinks that this Revolution was caused by the deficit of a few millions!"

"Distrust small outbreaks," said Boisberthelot.

"Everything is going badly," resumed La Vieuville.

"Yes; La Rouarie is dead; Du Fres-

nay is an idiot. What pitiful leaders all those bishops are—that Concy, Bishop of Rochelle; that Beaupril Saint-Aulaire, Bishop of Poitiers; that Mercy, Bishop of Luçon and lover of Madame de l'Eschasserie—”

“Whose name is Servanteau, you know, commander; L'Eschasserie is the name of an estate.”

“And that false Bishop of Agra—who is *cure* of I know not what.”

“Of Dol. He is called Guillot de Folleville. At least he is brave, and he fights.”

“Priests when soldiers are needed! Bishops who are not bishops! Generals who are no generals!”

La Vieuville interrupted Boisberthelot.

“Commander, have you the *Moniteur* in your cabin?”

“Yes.”

“What are they playing in Paris just now?”

“*Adèle and Poulin*, and *The Cavern*.”

“I should like to see that.”

“You will be able to. We shall be at Paris in a month.”

Boisberthelot reflected a moment, and added—“At the latest. Mr. Windham said so to Lord Hood.”

“But then, captain, everything is not going so ill.”

“Zounds! everything would go well, on condition that the war in Brittany could be properly conducted.”

La Vieuville shook his head.

“Commander,” he asked, “do we land the marines?”

“Yes; if the coast is for us—not if it is hostile. Sometimes war must break down doors, sometimes slip in quietly. Civil war ought always to have a false key in its pocket. We shall do all in our power. The most important is the chief.” Then Boisberthelot added thoughtfully:

“La Vieuville, what do you think of the Chevalier de Dieugie?”

“The younger?”

“Yes.”

“For a leader?”

“Yes.”

“That he is another officer for open country and pitched battles. Only the peasant understands the thickets.”

“Then resign yourself to General Stoflet and to General Cathelineau.”

La Vieuville mused a while, and then said, “It needs a prince; a prince of France; a prince of the blood—a true prince.”

“Why? Whoever says prince—”

“Says poltroon. I know it, captain. But one is needed for the effect on the big stupid eyes of the country lads.”

“My dear chevalier, the princes will not come.”

“We will get on without them.”

Boisberthelot pressed his hand upon his forehead with the mechanical movement of a man endeavoring to bring out some idea. He exclaimed:

“Well, let us try the general we have here.”

“He is a great nobleman.”

“Do you believe he will answer?”

“Provided he is strong.”

“That is to say, ferocious,” said Boisberthelot.

The count and the chevalier looked fixedly at one another.

“Monsieur du Boisberthelot, you have said the word—ferocious. Yes; that is what we need. This is a war without pity. The hour is to the bloodthirsty. The regicides have cut off Louis XVI.'s head—we will tear off the four limbs of the regicides. Yes, the general necessary is General Inexorable. In Anjou and Upper Poitou the chiefs do the magnanimous; they dabble in generosity—noth-

ing moves on. In the Marais and the country of Retz, the chiefs are ferocious—everything goes forward. It is because Charette is savage that he holds his own against Parrein—it is hyena against hyena.”

Boisberthelot had no time to reply; La Vieuville's words were suddenly cut short by a desperate cry, and at the same instant they heard a noise as unaccountable as it was awful. The cry and this noise came from the interior of the vessel.

The captain and lieutenant made a rush for the gun-deck, but could not get down. All the gunners were hurrying frantically up.

A frightful thing had just happened !

CHAPTER IV.

TORMENTUM BELLI.

ONE of the carronades of the battery, a twenty-four-pounder, had got loose.

This is perhaps the most formidable of ocean accidents. Nothing more terrible can happen to a vessel in open sea and under full sail.

A gun that breaks its moorings becomes suddenly some indescribable supernatural beast. It is a machine which transforms itself into a monster. This mass turns upon its wheels, has the rapid movements of a billiard-ball; rolls with the rolling, pitches with the pitching; goes, comes, pauses, seems to meditate; resumes its course, rushes along the ship from end to end like an arrow, circles about, springs aside, evades, rears, breaks, kills, exterminates. It is a battering-ram which assaults a wall at its

own caprice. Moreover, the battering-ram is metal, the wall wood. It is the entrance of matter into liberty. One might say that this eternal slave avenges itself. It seems as if the power of evil hidden in what we call inanimate objects finds a vent and bursts suddenly out. It has an air of having lost patience, of seeking some fierce, obscure retribution; nothing more inexorable than this rage of the inanimate. The mad mass has the bounds of a panther, the weight of the elephant, the agility of the mouse, the obstinacy of the axe, the unexpectedness of the surge, the rapidity of lightning, the deafness of the tomb. It weighs ten thousand pounds, and it rebounds like a child's ball. Its flight is a wild whirl abruptly cut at right angles. What is to be done? How to end this? A tempest ceases, a cyclone passes, a wind falls, a broken mast is replaced, a leak is stopped, a fire dies out; but how to control this enormous brute of bronze? In what way can one attack it?

You can make a mastiff hear reason, astound a bull, fascinate a boa, frighten a tiger, soften a lion; but there is no resource with that monster, a cannon let loose. You cannot kill it—it is dead; at the same time it lives. It lives with a sinister life bestowed on it by Infinity.

The planks beneath it give it play. It is moved by the ship, which is moved by the sea, which is moved by the wind. This destroyer is a plaything. The ship, the waves, the blasts, all aid it; hence its frightful vitality. How to assail this fury of complication? How to fetter this monstrous mechanism for wrecking a ship? How foresee its comings and goings, its returns, its stops, its shocks? Any one of these blows upon the sides may stave out the vessel. How divine its awful gyrations! One has to deal

with a projectile which thinks, seems to possess ideas, and which changes its direction at each instant. How stop the course of something which must be avoided? The horrible cannon flings itself about, advances, recoils, strikes to the right, strikes to the left, flees, passes, disconcerts ambushes, breaks down obstacles, crushes men like flies. The great danger of the situation is in the mobility of its base. How combat an inclined plane which has caprices? The ship, so to speak, has lightning imprisoned in its womb which seeks to escape; it is like thunder rolling above an earthquake.

In an instant the whole crew were on foot. The fault was the chief gunner's; he had neglected to fix home the screw-nut of the mooring-chain, and had so badly shackled the four wheels of the carronade that the play given to the sole and frame had separated the platform, and ended by breaking the breeching. The cordage had broken, so that the gun was no longer secure on the carriage. The stationary breeching which prevents recoil was not in use at that period. As a heavy wave struck the port, the carronade, weakly attached, recoiled, burst its chain, and began to rush wildly about. Conceive, in order to have an idea of this strange sliding, a drop of water running down a pane of glass.

At the moment when the lashings gave way the gunners were in the battery, some in groups, others standing alone, occupied with such duties as sailors perform in expectation of the command to clear for action. The carronade, hurled forward by the pitching, dashed into this knot of men, and crushed four at the first blow; then, flung back and shot out anew by the rolling, it cut in two a fifth poor fellow, glanced off to the larboard side, and struck a piece of the battery with such force as to

unship it. Then rose the cry of distress which had been heard. The men rushed toward the ladder—the gun-deck emptied in the twinkling of an eye. The enormous cannon was left alone. She was given up to herself. She was her own mistress, and mistress of the vessel. She could do what she willed with both. This whole crew, accustomed to laugh in battle, trembled now. To describe the universal terror would be impossible.

Captain Boisberthelot and Lieutenant Vieuville, although both intrepid men, stopped at the head of the stairs, and remained mute, pale, hesitating, looking down on the deck. Some one pushed them aside with his elbow and descended.

It was their passenger—the peasant—the man of whom they had been speaking a moment before.

When he reached the foot of the ladder, he stood still.

CHAPTER V.

VIS ET VIR.

THE cannon came and went along the deck. One might have fancied it the living chariot of the Apocalypse. The marine-lantern oscillating from the ceiling added a dizzying whirl of lights and shadows to this vision. The shape of the cannon was undistinguishable from the rapidity of its course; now it looked black in the light, now it cast weird reflections through the gloom.

It kept on its work of destruction. It had already shattered four other pieces, and dug two crevices in the side, fortunately above the water-line, though they would leak in case a squall should come

on. It dashed itself frantically against the frame-work; the solid tie-beams resisted, their curved form giving them great strength, but they creaked ominously under the assaults of this terrible club, which seemed endowed with a sort of appalling ubiquity, striking on every side at once. The strokes of a bullet shaken in a bottle would not be madder or more rapid. The four wheels passed and re-passed above the dead men, cut, carved, slashed them, till the five corpses were a score of stumps rolling about the deck; the heads seemed to cry out; streams of blood twisted in and out of the planks with every pitch of the vessel. The ceiling, damaged in several places, began to gape. The whole ship was filled with the awful tumult.

The captain promptly recovered his composure, and at his order the sailors threw down into the deck everything which could deaden and check the mad rush of the gun—mattresses, hammocks, spare sails, coils of rope, extra equipments, and the bales of false assignats of which the corvette carried a whole cargo: an infamous deception which the English considered a fair trick in war.

But what could these rags avail? No one dared descend to arrange them in any useful fashion, and in a few instants they were mere heaps of lint.

There was just sea enough to render an accident as complete as possible. A tempest would have been desirable; it might have thrown the gun upside down, and the four wheels once in the air, the monster could have been mastered. But the devastation increased. There were gashes and even fractures in the masts, which, imbedded in the wood-work of the keel, pierce the decks of ships like great round pillars. The mizzen-mast was cracked, and the main-mast itself was injured under

the convulsive blows of the gun. The battery was being destroyed. Ten pieces out of the thirty were disabled; the breaches multiplied in the side, and the corvette began to take in water.

The old passenger, who had descended to the gun-deck, looked like a form of stone stationed at the foot of the stairs. He stood motionless, gazing sternly about upon the devastation. Indeed, it seemed impossible to take a single step forward.

Each bound of the liberated carronade menaced the destruction of the vessel. A few minutes more and shipwreck would be inevitable.

They must perish or put a summary end to the disaster—a decision must be made—but how?

What a combatant—this cannon! They must check this mad monster. They must seize this flash of lightning. They must overthrow this thunderbolt.

Boisberthelot said to La Vieuville, “Do you believe in God, chevalier?”

La Vieuville replied, “Yes. No. Sometimes.”

“In a tempest?”

“Yes; and in moments like this.”

“Only God can aid us here,” said Boisberthelot.

All were silent—the cannon kept up its horrible fracas.

The waves beat against the ship; their blows from without responded to the strokes of the cannon.

It was like two hammers alternating.

Suddenly, into the midst of this sort of inaccessible circus, where the escaped cannon leaped and bounded, there sprang a man with an iron bar in his hand. It was the author of this catastrophe, the gunner whose culpable negligence had caused the accident—the captain of the gun. Having been the means of bringing about the misfortune, he desired to

repair it. He had caught up a handspike in one fist, a tiller-rope with a slipping noose in the other, and jumped down into the gun-deck. Then a strange combat began; a titanic strife—the struggle of the gun against the gunner; a battle between matter and intelligence; a duel between the inanimate and the human.

The man was posted in an angle, the bar and rope in his two fists; backed against one of the riders, settled firmly on his legs as on two pillars of steel; livid, calm, tragic, rooted as it were in the planks, he waited.

He waited for the cannon to pass near him.

The gunner knew his piece, and it seemed to him that she must recognize her master. He had lived a long while with her. How many times he had thrust his hand between her jaws! It was his tame monster. He began to address it as he might have done his dog.

“Come!” said he. Perhaps he loved it.

He seemed to wish that it would turn toward him.

But to come toward him would be to spring upon him. Then he would be lost. How to avoid its crush? There was the question. All stared in terrified silence.

Not a breast respired freely, except perchance that of the old man who alone stood in the deck with the two combatants, a stern second.

He might himself be crushed by the piece. He did not stir.

Beneath them, the blind sea directed the battle.

At the instant when, accepting this awful hand-to-hand contest, the gunner approached to challenge the cannon, some chance fluctuation of the waves kept it for a moment immovable, as if suddenly stupefied.

“Come on!” the man said to it. It seemed to listen.

Suddenly it darted upon him. The gunner avoided the shock.

The struggle began—struggle unheard of. The fragile matching itself against the invulnerable. The thing of flesh attacking the brazen brute. On the one side blind force, on the other a soul.

The whole passed in a half-light. It was like the indistinct vision of a miracle.

A soul—strange thing; but you would have said that the cannon had one also—a soul filled with rage and hatred. This blindness appeared to have eyes. The monster had the air of watching the man. There was—one might have fancied so at least—cunning in this mass. It also chose its moment. It became some gigantic insect of metal, having, or seeming to have, the will of a demon. Sometimes this colossal grasshopper would strike the low ceiling of the gun-deck, then fall back on its four wheels like a tiger upon its four claws, and dart anew on the man. He—supple, agile, adroit—would glide away like a snake from the reach of these lightning-like movements. He avoided the encounters; but the blows which he escaped fell upon the vessel and continued the havoc.

An end of broken chain remained attached to the carronade. This chain had twisted itself, one could not tell how, about the screw of the breech-button. One extremity of the chain was fastened to the carriage. The other, hanging loose, whirled wildly about the gun and added to the danger of its blows.

The screw held it like a clenched hand, and the chain, multiplying the strokes of the battering-ram by its strokes of a thong, made a fearful whirlwind about the cannon—a whip of iron in a fist of brass. This chain complicated the battle.

Nevertheless, the man fought. Sometimes, even, it was the man who attacked the cannon. He crept along the side, bar and rope in hand, and the cannon had the air of understanding, and fled as if it perceived a snare. The man pursued it, formidable, fearless.

Such a duel could not last long. The gun seemed suddenly to say to itself, "Come, we must make an end!" and it paused. One felt the approach of the crisis. The cannon, as if in suspense, appeared to have, or had—because it seemed to all a sentient being—a furious premeditation. It sprang unexpectedly upon the gunner. He jumped aside, let it pass, and cried out with a laugh, "Try again!" The gun, as if in a fury, broke a carronade to larboard; then, seized anew by the invisible sling which held it, was flung to starboard toward the man, who escaped.

Three carronades gave way under the blows of the gun; then as if blind and no longer conscious of what it was doing, it turned its back on the man, rolled from the stern to the bow, bruising the stem and making a breach in the plankings of the prow. The gunner had taken refuge at the foot of the stairs, a few steps from the old man, who was watching.

The gunner held his handspike in rest. The cannon seemed to perceive him, and, without taking the trouble to turn itself, backed upon him with the quickness of an axe-stroke. The gunner, if driven back against the side, was lost. The crew uttered a simultaneous cry.

But the old passenger, until now immovable, made a spring more rapid than all those wild whirls. He seized a bale of the false assignats, and at the risk of being crushed, succeeded in flinging it between the wheels of the carronade. This manœuvre, decisive and dangerous, could not have been executed with more

adroitness and precision by a man trained to all the exercises set down in Durosels' "Manual of Sea Gunnery."

The bale had the effect of a plug. A pebble may stop a log, a tree-branch turn an avalanche. The carronade stumbled. The gunner, in his turn, seizing this terrible chance, plunged his iron bar between the spokes of one of the hind wheels. The cannon was stopped. It staggered. The man, using the bar as a lever, rocked it to and fro. The heavy mass turned over with a clang like a falling bell, and the gunner, dripping with sweat, rushed forward headlong and passed the slipping noose of the tiller-rope about the bronze neck of the overthrown monster.

It was ended. The man had conquered. The ant had subdued the mastodon; the pigmy had taken the thunderbolt prisoner.

The marines and the sailors clapped their hands.

The whole crew hurried down with cables and chains, and in an instant the cannon was securely lashed.

The gunner saluted the passenger.

"Sir," he said to him, "you have saved my life."

The old man had resumed his impassible attitude, and did not reply.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TWO ENDS OF THE SCALE.

THE man had conquered, but one might say that the cannon had conquered also. Immediate shipwreck had been avoided, but the corvette was by no means saved. The dilapidation of the vessel seemed irremediable. The sides had five breeches,

one of which, very large, was in the bow. Out of the thirty carronades, twenty lay useless in their frames.

The carronade, which had been captured and rechained, was itself disabled; the screw of the breech-button was forced, and the leveling of the piece impossible in consequence. The battery was reduced to nine pieces. The hold had sprung a leak. It was necessary at once to repair the damages and set the pumps to work.

The gun-deck, now that one had time to look about it, offered a terrible spectacle. The interior of a mad elephant's cage could not have been more completely dismantled.

However great the necessity that the corvette should escape observation, a still more imperious necessity presented itself—immediate safety. It had been necessary to light up the deck by lanterns placed here and there along the sides.

But during the whole time this tragic diversion had lasted, the crew were so absorbed by the one question of life or death that they noticed little what was passing outside the scene of the duel. The fog had thickened; the weather had changed; the wind had driven the vessel at will; it had got out of its route, in plain sight of Jersey and Guernsey, farther to the south than it ought to have gone, and was surrounded by a troubled sea. The great waves kissed the gaping wounds of the corvette—kisses full of peril. The sea rocked her menacingly. The breeze became a gale. A squall, a tempest perhaps, threatened. It was impossible to see before one four oars' length.

While the crew were repairing summarily and in haste the ravages of the gun-deck, stopping the leaks and putting back into position the guns which had escaped the disaster, the old passenger had gone on deck.

He stood with his back against the main-mast.

He had paid no attention to a proceeding which had taken place on the vessel. The Chevalier La Vieuville had drawn up the marines in line on either side of the main-mast, and at the whistle of the boatswain the sailors busy in the rigging stood upright on the yards.

Count du Boisberthelot advanced toward the passenger. Behind the captain marched a man haggard, breathless, his dress in disorder, yet wearing a satisfied look under it all. It was the gunner who had just now so opportunely shown himself a tamer of monsters, and who had got the better of the cannon.

The count made a military salute to the unknown in peasant garb, and said to him, "General, here is the man."

The gunner held himself erect, his eyes downcast, standing in a soldierly attitude.

Count du Boisberthelot continued: "General, taking into consideration what this man has done, do you not think there is something for his commanders to do?"

"I think there is," said the old man.

"Be good enough to give the orders," returned Boisberthelot.

"It is for you to give them. You are the captain."

"But you are the general," answered Boisberthelot.

The old man looked at the gunner. "Approach," said he.

The gunner moved forward a step. The old man turned toward Count du Boisberthelot, detached the cross of Saint Louis from the captain's uniform and fastened it on the jacket of the gunner.

"Hurrah!" cried the sailors.

The marines presented arms. The old passenger, pointing with his finger toward

the bewildered gunner, added—"Now let that man be shot."

Stupor succeeded the applause.

Then, in the midst of a silence like that of the tomb, the old man raised his voice. He said:

"A negligence has endangered this ship. At this moment she is perhaps lost. To be at sea is to face the enemy. A vessel at open sea is an army which gives battle. The tempest conceals, but does not absent itself. The whole sea is an ambuscade. Death is the penalty of any fault committed in the face of the enemy. No fault is reparable. Courage ought to be rewarded and negligence punished."

These words fell one after the other slowly, solemnly, with a sort of inexorable measure, like the blows of an axe upon an oak.

And the old man, turning to the soldiers, added—"Do your duty."

The man upon whose breast shone the cross of Saint Louis bowed his head.

At a sign from Count du Boisberthelot, two sailors descended between decks, then returned, bringing the hammock winding-sheet. The ship's chaplain, who since the time of sailing had been at prayer in the officer's quarters, accompanied the two sailors; a sergeant detached from the line twelve marines, whom he arranged in two ranks, six by six; the gunner, without uttering a word, placed himself between the two files. The chaplain, crucifix in hand, advanced and stood near him.

"March!" said the sergeant.

The platoon moved with slow steps toward the bow. The two sailors who carried the shroud followed.

A gloomy silence fell upon the corvette. A hurricane moaned in the distance.

A few instants later there was a flash; a report followed, echoing among the

shadows; then all was silent; then came the thud of a body falling into the sea.

The old passenger still leaned back against the main-mast with folded arms, thinking silently.

Boisberthelot pointed toward him with the forefinger of his left hand, and said in a low voice to La Vieuville:

"The Vendée has found a head!"

CHAPTER VII.

HE WHO SETS SAIL PUTS INTO A LOTTERY.

BUT what was to become of the corvette?

The clouds, which the whole night through had touched the waves, now lowered so thickly that the horizon was no longer visible; the sea seemed to be covered with a pall. Nothing to be seen but fog—a situation always perilous, even for a vessel in good condition.

Added to the mist came the surging swell.

The time had been used to good purpose: the corvette had been lightened by throwing overboard everything which could be cleared from the havoc made by the carronade—the dismantled guns, the broken carriages, frames twisted or unnailed, the fragments of splintered wood and iron; the portholes had been opened, and the corpses and parts of bodies, enveloped in tarpaulin, were slid down planks into the waves.

The sea was no longer manageable. Not that the tempest was imminent; it seemed on the contrary that the hurricane rustling behind the horizon decreased and the squall was moving north-

ward; but the waves were very high still, which indicated disturbance in the depths; the corvette could offer slight resistance to shocks in her crippled condition, so that the great waves might prove fatal to her.

Gacquoil stood thoughtfully at the helm. To face ill-fortune with a bold front is the habit of those accustomed to rule at sea.

La Vieuville, who was the sort of man that becomes gay in the midst of disaster, accosted Gacquoil.

"Well, pilot," said he, "the squall has missed fire. Its attempt at sneezing comes to nothing. We shall get out of it. We shall have wind, and that is all."

Gacquoil replied, seriously, "Where there is wind there are waves."

Neither laughing nor sad, such is the sailor. The response had a disquieting significance. For a leaky ship to encounter a high sea is to fill rapidly. Gacquoil emphasized his prognostic by a frown. Perhaps La Vieuville had spoken almost jovial and gay words a little too soon after the catastrophe of the gun and its gunner. There are things which bring bad luck at sea. The ocean is secretive; one never knows what it means to do; it is necessary to be always on guard against it.

La Vieuville felt the necessity of getting back to gavity. "Where are we, pilot?" he asked.

The pilot replied, "We are in the hands of God."

A pilot is a master; he must always be allowed to do what he will, and often he must be allowed to say what he pleases. Generally this species of man speaks little.

La Vieuville moved away. He had asked a question of the pilot; it was the

horizon which replied. The sea suddenly cleared.

The fogs which trailed across the waves were quickly rent; the dark confusion of the billows spread out to the horizon's verge in a shadowy half-light, and this was what became visible:

The sky seemed covered with a lid of clouds, but they no longer touched the water; in the east appeared a whiteness, which was the dawn; in the west trembled a corresponding pallor, which was the setting moon. These two ghostly presences drew opposite each other narrow bands of pale lights along the horizon, between the sombre sea and the gloomy sky. Across each of those lines of light were sketched black profiles upright and immovable.

To the west, against the moonlit sky, stood out sharply three lofty rocks, erect as Celtic cromlechs.

To the east, against the pale horizon of morning, rose eight sail ranged in order at regular intervals in a formidable array.

The three rocks were a reef; the eight ships, a squadron.

Behind the vessel was the Minquiers, a rock of an evil renown; before her, the French cruisers. To the west, the abyss; to the east, carnage: she was between a shipwreck and a combat.

For meeting the reef, the corvette had a broken hull, rigging disjointed, masts tottering in their foundations; for facing battle, she had a battery where one-and-twenty cannon out of thirty were dismounted, and whose best gunners were dead. The dawn was yet faint; there still remained a little night to them. This might even last for some time, since it was principally made by thick, high clouds presenting the solid appearance of a vault. The wind, which had succeeded in

dispersing the lower mists, was forcing the corvette toward the Minquiers. In her excessive feebleness and dilapidation, she scarcely obeyed the helm; she rolled rather than sailed, and, smitten by the waves, she yielded passively to their impulse. The Minquiers, a dangerous reef, was still more rugged at that time than it is now. Several towers of this citadel of the abyss have been razed by the incessant chopping of the sea. The configuration of reefs changes; it is not idly that waves are called the swords of the ocean; each tide is the stroke of a saw. At that period, to strike on the Minquiers was to perish.

As for the cruisers, they were the squadron of Cancale, afterward so celebrated under the command of that Captain Duchesne whom Loquinio called "Father Duchesne."

The situation was critical. During the struggle of the unchained carronade, the corvette had, unobserved, got out of her course, and sailed rather toward Granville than Saint Malo. Even if she had been in a condition to have been handled and to carry sail, the Minquiers would have barred her return toward Jersey, and the cruisers would have prevented her reaching France.

For the rest, tempest there was none. But, as the pilot had said, there was a swell. The sea, rolling under a rough wind and above a rocky bottom, was savage.

The sea never says at once what it wishes. The gulf hides everything, even trickery. One might almost say that the sea has a plan: it advances and recoils; it proposes and contradicts itself; it sketches a storm and renounces its design; it promises the abyss, and does not hold to it; it threatens the north and strikes the south.

All night the corvette *Claymore* had had the fog and the fear of the storm; the sea had belied itself, but in a savage fashion: it had sketched in the tempest, but developed the reef. It was shipwreck just the same, under another form.

So that to destruction upon the rocks was added extermination by combat—one enemy complementing the other.

La Vieuville cried amid his brave merriment, "Shipwreck here—battle there! We have thrown double-fives!"

CHAPTER VIII.

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THE corvette was little more than a wreck.

In the wan, dim light, midst the blackness of the clouds, in the confused, changing line of the horizon, in the mysterious sullenness of the waves, there was a sepulchral solemnity. Except for the hissing breath of the hostile wind, all was silent. The catastrophe rose with majesty from the gulf. It resembled rather an apparition than an attack. Nothing stirred among the rocks; nothing moved on the vessels. It was an indescribable, colossal silence. Had they to deal with something real? One might have believed it a dream sweeping across the sea. There are legends of such visions; the corvette was in a manner between the demon reef and the phantom fleet.

Count du Boisberthelot gave orders in a half-voice to La Vieuville, who descended to the gun-deck; then the captain seized his telescope and stationed himself at the stern by the side of the pilot.

Gacquoil's whole effort was to keep the corvette to the wind; for if struck on the side by the wind and the sea, she would inevitably capsize.

"Pilot," said the captain, "where are we?"

"Off the Minquiers."

"On which side?"

"The bad one."

"What bottom?"

"Small rocks."

"Can we turn broadside on?"

"We can always die," said the pilot.

The captain leveled his glass toward the west and examined the Minquiers; then he turned to the east and studied the sail in sight.

The pilot continued, as if talking to himself—"It is the Minquiers. It is where the laughing sea-mew and the great black-hooded gull rest, when they make for Holland."

In the meantime the captain counted the sail.

There were, indeed, eight vessels, drawn up in line, and lifting their warlike profiles above the water. In the centre was seen the lofty sweep of a three-decker.

The captain questioned the pilot. "Do you know those ships?"

"Indeed, yes!" replied Gacquoil.

"What are they?"

"It is the squadron."

"Of France?"

"Of the devil."

There was a silence. The captain resumed—"The whole body of cruisers are there."

"Not all."

In fact, on the 2d of April, Valazé had announced to the Convention that ten frigates and six ships of the line were cruising in the Channel. The recollection of this came into the captain's mind.

"Right," said he; "the squadron con-

sists of sixteen vessels. There are only eight here."

"The rest," said Gacquoil, "are lagging below, the whole length of the coast, and on the look out."

The captain, still with his glass to his eye, murmured, "A three-decker, two first-class frigates, and five second-class."

"But I, too," growled Gacquoil, "have marked them out."

"Good vessels," said the captain; "I have done something myself toward commanding them."

"As for me," said Gacquoil, "I have seen them close by. I do not mistake one for the other. I have their description in my head."

The captain handed his telescope to the pilot.

"Pilot, can you make out the three-decker clearly?"

"Yes, captain: it is the *Côte d'Or*."

"Which they have rebaptized," said the captain. "She was formerly the *États de Bourgogne*. A new vessel. A hundred and twenty-eight guns."

He took a pencil and note-book from his pocket, and made the figure 128 on one of the leaves.

He continued: "Pilot, what is the first sail to larboard?"

"It is the *Expérimentée*. The—"

"First-class frigate. Fifty-two guns. She was fitted out at Brest two months since."

The captain marked the figure 52 on his note-book.

"Pilot," he asked, "what is the second sail to larboard?"

"The *Dryade*."

"First-class frigate. Forty eighteen-pounders. She has been in India. She has a good naval reputation."

And beneath the 52 he put the figure

40; then lifting his head—"Now to star-board."

"Commander, those are all second-class frigates. There are five of them."

"Which is the first, starting from the vessel?"

"The *Résolûte*."

"Thirty-two pieces of eighteen. And the second?"

"The *Richemont*."

"Same. The next?"

"The *Athéiste*."*

"Odd name to take to sea. What next?"

"The *Calypso*."

"And then?"

"*La Preneuse*."

"Five frigates, each of thirty-two guns."

The captain wrote 160 below the first figures.

"Pilot," said he, "you recognize them perfectly."

"And you," replied Gacquoil—"you know them well, captain. To recognize is something, to know is better."

The captain had his eyes fixed on his note-book, and added between his teeth:

"One hundred and twenty-eight; fifty-two; forty; a hundred and sixty."

At this moment *La Vieuville* came on deck again.

"Chevalier," the captain cried out to him, "we are in sight of three hundred and eighty cannon."

"So be it," said *La Vieuville*.

"You come from the inspection, *La Vieuville*: how many guns, exactly, have we fit for firing?"

"Nine."

"So be it," said *Boisberthelot*, in his turn.

He took the telescope from the pilot's hands and studied the horizon.

The eight vessels, silent and black, seemed motionless, but they grew larger.

They were approaching imperceptibly.

La Vieuville made a military salute.

"Commander," said he, "this is my report. I distrusted this corvette *Claymore*. It is always annoying to embark suddenly on a vessel that does not know you or that does not love you. English ship—traitor to Frenchmen. That slut of a carronade proved it. I have made the round. Anchors good. They are not made of half-finished iron, but forged bars soldered under the tilt-hammer. The flukes are solid. Cables excellent: easy to pay out; regulation length, a hundred and twenty fathoms. Munitions in plenty. Six gunners dead. A hundred and seventy-one rounds apiece."

"Because there are but nine pieces left," murmured the captain.

Boisberthelot leveled his telescope with the horizon. The squadron was still slowly approaching.

The carronades possess one advantage—three men are enough to work them; but they have one inconvenience—they do not carry so far or aim so true as guns. It would be necessary to let the squadron get within range of the carronades.

The captain gave his orders in a low voice. There was silence throughout the vessel. No signal to clear for battle had been given, but it was done. The corvette was as much disabled for combat with men as against the waves. Everything that was possible was done with this ruin of a war-vessel. By the gangway near the tiller-ropes were heaped all the hawsers and spare cables for strengthening the masts in case of need. The cockpit was put in order for the

* *Marine Archives*: State of the Fleet in 1793.

wounded. According to the naval use of that time, the deck was barricaded, which is a guaranty against balls, but not against bullets. The ball-gauges were brought, although it was a little late, to verify the calibres; but so many incidents had not been foreseen. Each sailor received a cartridge-box, and stuck into his belt a pair of pistols and a dirk. The hammocks were stowed away, the artillery pointed, the musketry prepared, the axes and grapplings laid out, the cartridge and bullet stores made ready, and the powder-room opened. Every man was at his post. All was done without a word being spoken, like arrangements carried on in the chamber of a dying person. All was haste and gloom.

Then the corvette showed her broadside. She had six anchors, like a frigate. The whole six were cast: the cock-bill anchor forward, the kedger aft, the flood-anchor toward the open, the ebb-anchor on the side to the rocks, the bower-anchor to starboard, and the sheet-anchor to larboard.

The nine carronades still in condition were put into form; the whole nine on one side—that toward the enemy.

The squadron had on its part not less silently completed its manœuvres. The eight vessels now formed a semicircle, of which the *Minquiers* made the chord. The *Claymore*, inclosed in this semicircle, and into the bargain tied down by her anchors, was backed by the reef—that is to say, by shipwreck.

It was like a pack of hounds about a wild boar, not yet giving tongue, but showing their teeth.

It seemed as if on the one side and the other they awaited some signal.

The gunners of the *Claymore* stood to their pieces.

Boisberthelot said to La Vieuville, "I should like to open fire."

"A coquette's whim," replied La Vieuville.

CHAPTER IX.

SOME ONE ESCAPES.

THE passenger had not quitted the deck; he watched all the proceedings with the same impassible mien.

Boisberthelot approached. "Sir," he said to him, "the preparations are complete. We are now lashed fast to our tomb; we shall not let go our hold. We are the prisoners of either the squadron or the reef. To yield to the enemy, or founder among the rocks; we have no other choice. One resource remains to us—to die. It is better to fight than be wrecked. I would rather be shot than drowned; in the matter of death, I prefer fire to water. But dying is the business of the rest of us; it is not yours. You are the man chosen by the princes; you are appointed to a great mission—the direction of the war in Vendée. Your loss is perhaps the monarchy lost—therefore you must live. Our honor bids us remain here; yours bids you go. General, you must quit the ship. I am going to give you a man and a boat. To reach the coast by a détour is not impossible. It is not yet day; the waves are high, the sea is dark; you will escape. There are cases when to fly is to conquer."

The old man bowed his stately head in sign of acquiescence.

Count du Boisberthelot raised his voice: "Soldiers and sailors!" he cried.

Every movement ceased; from each





point of the vessel all faces turned toward the captain.

He continued : " This man who is among us represents the king. He has been confided to us ; we must save him. He is necessary to the throne of France ; in default of a prince, he will be—at least this is what we try for—the leader in the Vendée. He is a great general. He was to have landed in France with us ; he must land without us. To save the head is to save all."

" Yes ! yes ! yes ! " cried the voices of the whole crew.

The captain continued : " He is about to risk, he also, serious danger. It will not be easy to reach the coast. In order to face the angry sea, the boat should be large, and should be small in order to escape the cruisers. What must be done is to make land at some safe point, and better toward Fougères than in the direction of Coutances. It needs an athletic sailor, a good oarsman and swimmer, who belongs to this coast, and knows the Channel. There is night enough, so that the boat can leave the corvette without being perceived. And, besides, we are going to have smoke, which will serve to hide her. The boat's size will help her through the shallows. Where the panther is snared, the weasel escapes. There is no outlet for us ; there is for her. The boat will row rapidly off ; the enemy's ships will not see her ; and moreover, during that time we are going to amuse them ourselves. Is it decided ? "

" Yes ! yes ! yes ! " cried the crew.

" There is not an instant to lose," pursued the captain. " Is there any man willing ? "

A sailor stepped out of the ranks in the darkness, and said, " I."

CHAPTER X.

DOES HE ESCAPE ?

A FEW minutes later, one of those little boats called a " gig," which are especially appropriated to the captain's service, pushed off from the vessel. There were two men in this boat—the old man in the stern, and the sailor who had volunteered in the bow. The night still lingered. The sailor, in obedience to the captain's orders, rowed vigorously in the direction of the Minquiers. For that matter, no other issue was possible.

Some provisions had been put into the boat : a bag of biscuit, a smoked ox-tongue, and a cask of water.

At the instant the gig was let down, La Vieuville, a scoffer even in the presence of destruction, leaned over the corvette's stern-post, and sneered this farewell to the boat : " She is a good one if one want to escape, and excellent if one wish to drown."

" Sir," said the pilot, " let us laugh no longer."

The start was quickly made, and there was soon a considerable distance between the boat and the corvette. The wind and the waves were in the oarsman's favor ; the little bark fled swiftly, undulating through the twilight, and hidden by the height of the waves.

The sea seemed to wear a look of sombre, indescribable expectation.

Suddenly, amid the vast and tumultuous silence of the ocean, rose a voice, which, increased by the speaking-trumpet as if by the brazen mask of antique tragedy, sounded almost superhuman.

It was the voice of Captain Boisberthelot giving his commands : " Royal marines," cried he, " nail the white flag to the main-mast. We are about to see our last sunrise."

And the corvette fired its first shot.

"Long live the King!" shouted the crew.

Then from the horizon's verge echoed an answering shout, immense, distant, confused, yet distinct nevertheless: "Long live the Republic!"

And a din like the peal of three hundred thunderbolts burst over the depths of the sea.

The battle began.

The sea was covered with smoke and fire. Streams of foam, made by the falling bullets, whitened the waves on every side.

The *Claymore* began to spit flame on the eight vessels. At the same time the whole squadron, ranged in a half-moon about the corvette, opened fire from all its batteries. The horizon was in a blaze. A volcano seemed to have burst suddenly out of the sea. The wind twisted to and fro the vast crimson banner of battle, amid which the ships appeared and disappeared like phantoms.

In front the black skeleton of the corvette showed against the red background.

The white banner, with its *fleur-de-lis*, could be seen floating from the main.

The two men seated in the little boat kept silence. The triangular shallows of the Minquiers, a sort of submarine Trinacrium, is larger than the entire island of Jersey; the sea covers it; it has for culminating point a platform, which even the highest tides do not reach, from whence six mighty rocks detach themselves toward the northeast, ranged in a straight line, and producing the effect of a great wall, which has crumbled here and there. The strait between the plateau and the six reefs is only practicable to boats drawing

very little water. Beyond this strait is the open sea.

The sailor who had undertaken the command of the boat made for this strait. By that means he put the Minquiers between the battle and the little bark. He manœuvred the narrow channel skillfully, avoiding the reefs to larboard and starboard. The rocks now masked the conflict. The lurid light of the horizon, and the awful uproar of the cannonading, began to lessen as the distance increased; but the continuance of the reports proved that the corvette held firm, and meant to exhaust to the very last her one hundred and seventy-one broadsides. Presently the boat reached safe water, beyond the reef, beyond the battle, out of reach of the bullets.

Little by little the face of the sea became less dark; the rays, against which the darkness struggled, widened; the foam burst into jets of light, and the tops of the waves gave back white reflections.

Day appeared.

The boat was out of danger so far as the enemy was concerned, but the most difficult part of the task remained. She was saved from grape-shot, but not from shipwreck. She was a mere egg-shell, in a high sea, without deck, without sail, without mast, without compass, having no resource but her oars, in the presence of the ocean and the hurricane; an atom at the mercy of giants.

Then, amid this immensity, this solitude, lifting his face, whitened by the morning, the man in the bow of the boat looked fixedly at the one in the stern, and said: "I am the brother of him you ordered to be shot."

BOOK THE THIRD.

H A L M A L O .

CHAPTER I.

SPEECH IS THE "WORD."*

THE old man slowly raised his head.

He who had spoken was a man of about thirty. His forehead was brown with seatan; his eyes were peculiar; they had the keen glance of a sailor in the open pupils of a peasant. He held the oars vigorously in his two hands. His air was mild.

In his belt were a dirk, two pistols, and a rosary.

"Who are you?" asked the old man.

"I have just told you."

"What do you want with me?"

The sailor shipped the oars, folded his arms, and replied: "To kill you."

"As you please," said the old man.

The other raised his voice. "Get ready!"

"For what?"

"To die."

"Why?" asked the old man.

There was a silence. The sailor seemed for an instant confused by the question. He repeated, "I say that I mean to kill you."

"And I ask you what for?"

The sailor's eyes flashed lightning. "Because you killed my brother."

The old man replied with perfect calmness, "I began by saving his life."

"That is true. You saved him first, then you killed him."

"It was not I who killed him."

"Who, then?"

"His own fault."

The sailor stared open-mouthed at the old man; then his eyebrows met again in their murderous frown.

"What is your name?" asked the old man.

"Halmalo; but you do not need to know my name in order to be killed by me."

At this moment the sun rose. A ray struck full upon the sailor's face, and vividly lighted up that savage countenance. The old man studied it attentively.

The cannonading, though still continued, was broken and irregular. A vast cloud of smoke weighed down the horizon. The boat, no longer directed by the oarsman, drifted to leeward.

The sailor seized in his right hand one of the pistols at his belt, and the rosary in his left.

The old man raised himself to his full height. "You believe in God?" said he.

"Our Father which art in Heaven," replied the sailor. And he made the sign of the cross.

"Have you a mother?"

"Yes."

He made a second sign of the cross. Then he resumed: "It is all said. I give you a minute, my lord." And he cocked the pistol.

"Why do you call me 'my lord'?"

"Because you are a lord. That is plain enough to be seen."

"Have you a lord—you?"

"Yes, and a grand one. Does one live without a lord?"

"Where is he?"

"I don't know. He has left this country. He is called the Marquis de

* "La Parole c'est le Verbe." Any one familiar with the New Testament will see the Author's meaning.—*Trans.*

Lantenac, Viscount de Fontenay, Prince in Brittany; he is the lord of the *Sept-Forêts* (Seven Forests). I never saw him, but that does not prevent his being my master."

"And if you were to see him, would you obey him?"

"Indeed, yes. Why, I should be a heathen if I did not obey him. I owe obedience to God, then to the king, who is like God, and then to the lord, who is like the king. But we have nothing to do with all that; you killed my brother—I must kill you."

The old man replied: "Agreed; I killed your brother. I did well."

The sailor clenched the pistol more tightly. "Come," said he.

"So be it," said the old man.

Still perfectly composed, he added, "Where is the priest?"

The sailor stared at him. "The priest?"

"Yes; the priest. I gave your brother a priest; you owe me one."

"I have none," said the sailor.

And he continued: "Are priests to be found out at sea?"

The convulsive thunderings of battle sounded more and more distant.

"Those who are dying yonder have theirs," said the old man.

"That is true," murmured the sailor; "they have the chaplain."

The old man continued: "You will lose me my soul—that is a serious matter."

The sailor bent his head in thought.

"And in losing me my soul," pursued the old man, "you lose your own. Listen. I have pity on you. Do what you choose. As for me, I did my duty a little while ago, first in saving your brother's life, and afterward in taking it from him; and I am doing my duty now

in trying to save your soul. Reflect. It is your affair. Do you hear the cannon-shots at this instant? There are men perishing yonder, there are desperate creatures dying, there are husbands who will never again see their wives, fathers who will never again see their children, brothers who, like you, will never again see their brothers. And by whose fault? Your brother's—yours. You believe in God, do you not? Well, you know that God suffers in this moment; He suffers in the person of His Most Christian Son the King of France, who is a child as Jesus was, and who is a prisoner in the fortress of the Temple. God suffers in His Church of Brittany; He suffers in His insulted cathedrals, His desecrated Gospels; in His violated houses of prayer; in His murdered priests. What did we intend to do, we, with that vessel which is perishing at this instant? We were going to succor God's children. If your brother had been a good servant, if he had faithfully done his duty like a wise and prudent man, the accident of the cannonade would not have occurred, the corvette would not have been disabled, she would not have got out of her course, she would not have fallen in with this fleet of perdition, and at this hour we should be landing in France, all, like valiant soldiers and seamen as we were, sabre in hand, the white flag unfurled—numerous, glad, joyful; and we should have gone to help the brave Vendean peasants to save France, to save the king—we should have been doing God's work. This was what we meant to do; this was what we should have done. It is what I—the only one who remains—set out to do. But you oppose yourself thereto. In this contest of the impious against the priests, in this strife of the regicides against the king, in this struggle of Satan against God, you

are on the Devil's side. Your brother was the demon's first auxiliary; you are the second. He commenced; you finish. You are with the regicides against the throne; you are with the impious against the Church. You take away from God His last resource. Because I shall not be there—I, who represent the king—the hamlets will continue to burn, families to weep, priests to bleed, Brittany to suffer, the king to remain in prison, and Jesus Christ to be in distress. And who will have caused this? You. Go on; it is your affair. I depended on you to help bring about just the contrary of all this. I deceived myself. Ah, yes—it is true—you are right—I killed your brother. Your brother was courageous; I recompensed that. He was culpable; I punished that. He had failed in his duty; I did not fail in mine. What I did, I would do again. And I swear by the great Saint Anne of Auray, who sees us, that, in a similar case, I would shoot my son just as I shot your brother. Now you are master. Yes, I pity you. You have lied to your captain. You, Christian, are without faith; you, Breton, are without honor; I was confided to your loyalty and accepted by your treason; you offer my death to those to whom you had promised my life. Do you know who it is you are destroying here? It is yourself. You take my life from the king, and you give your eternity to the Devil. Go on; commit your crime; it is well. You sell cheaply your share in Paradise. Thanks to you, the Devil will conquer; thanks to you, the churches will fall; thanks to you, the heathen will continue to melt the bells and make cannon of them; they will shoot men with that which used to warn souls! At this moment in which I speak to you, perhaps the bell that rang for your baptism is killing your mother.

Go on; aid the Devil. Do not hesitate. Yes, I condemned your brother; but know this—I am an instrument of God. Ah, you pretend to judge the means God uses! Will you take it on yourself to judge Heaven's thunderbolt? Wretched man, you will be judged by it! Take care what you do. Do you even know whether I am in a state of grace? No. Go on all the same. Do what you like. You are free to cast me into hell, and to cast yourself there with me. Our two damnations are in your hand. It is you who will be responsible before God. We are alone; face to face in the abyss. Go on—finish—make an end. I am old and you are young; I am without arms and you are armed; kill me."

While the old man stood erect, uttering these words in a voice louder than the noise of the sea, the undulations of the waves showed him now in the shadow, now in the light. The sailor had grown lividly white; great drops of sweat fell from his forehead; he trembled like a leaf; he kissed his rosary again and again. When the old man finished speaking, he threw down his pistol and fell on his knees.

"Mercy, my lord! Pardon me!" he cried; "you speak like the good God. I have done wrong. My brother did wrong. I will try to repair his crime. Dispose of me. Command. I will obey."

"I give you pardon," said the old man.

CHAPTER II.

THE PEASANT'S MEMORY IS AS GOOD AS
THE CAPTAIN'S SCIENCE.

THE provisions which had been put into the boat proved most acceptable. The two fugitives, obliged to make long détours, took thirty-six hours to reach the coast. They passed a night at sea; but the night was fine, though there was too much moon to be favorable to those seeking concealment.

They were obliged first to row away from France, and gain the open sea toward Jersey. They heard the last broadside of the sinking corvette as one hears the final roar of the lion whom the hunters are killing in the wood. Then a silence fell upon the sea.

The *Claymore* died like the *Avenger*, but glory has ignored her. The man who fights against his own country is never a hero.

Halmalo was a marvelous seaman. He performed miracles of dexterity and intelligence; his improvisation of a route amid the reefs, the waves, and the enemy's watch, was a masterpiece. The wind had slackened and the sea grown calmer. Halmalo avoided the Caux des Minquiers, coasted the Chaussée-aux-Bœufs, and, in order that they might have a few hours' rest, took shelter in the little creek on the north side, practicable at low water; then rowing southward again, found means to pass between Granville and the Chausay Islands without being discovered by the look-out either of Granville or Chausay. He entered the bay of Saint-Michael—a bold undertaking, on account of the neighborhood of Cancale, an anchorage for the cruising squadron.

About an hour before sunset on the evening of the second day, he left Saint Michael's Mount behind him, and pro-

ceeded to land on a deserted beach, because the shifting sands made it dangerous. Fortunately the tide was high.

Halmalo drove the boat as far up as he could, tried the sand, found it firm, ran the bark aground and sprang on shore. The old man strode over the side after him and examined the horizon.

"Monseigneur," said Halmalo, "we are here at the mouth of the Couesnon. There is Beauvoir to starboard, and Huisnes to larboard. The belfry in front of us is Ardeoon."

The old man bent down to the boat and took a biscuit, which he put in his pocket, and said to Halmalo, "Take the rest."

Halmalo put the remains of the meat and biscuit into the bag and slung it over his shoulder. This done, he said, "Monseigneur, must I conduct or follow you?"

"Neither the one nor the other."

Halmalo regarded the speaker in stupefied wonder.

The old man continued: "Halmalo, we must separate. It will not answer to be two. There must be a thousand or one alone."

He paused, and drew from one of his pockets a green silk bow, rather like a cockade, with a gold *fleur-de-lis* embroidered in the centre. He resumed: "Do you know how to read?"

"No."

"That is fortunate. A man who can read is troublesome. Have you a good memory?"

"Yes."

"That will do. Listen, Halmalo. You must take to the right and I to the left. I shall go in the direction of Fougères, you toward Bazouges. Keep your bag; it gives you the look of a peasant. Conceal your weapons. Cut yourself a stick in the thickets. Creep among the fields

of rye, which are high. Slide behind the hedges. Climb the fences in order to go across the meadows. Leave passers-by at a distance. Avoid the roads and the bridges. Do not enter Pontorsin. Ah! you will have to cross the Couesnon. How will you manage?"

"I shall swim."

"That's right. And there is a ford—do you know where it is?"

"Between Ancy and Vieux-Viel."

"That is right. You do really belong to the country."

"But night is coming on. Where will monseigneur sleep?"

"I can take care of myself. And you—where will you sleep?"

"There are hollow trees. I was a peasant before I was a sailor."

"Throw away your sailor's hat; it will betray you. You will easily find a woolen cap."

"Oh, a peasant's thatch is to be found anywhere. The first fisherman will sell me his."

"Very good. Now listen. You know the woods?"

"All of them."

"Of the whole district?"

"From Noirmontier to Laval."

"Do you know their names too?"

"I know the woods; I know their names; I know about everything."

"You will forget nothing?"

"Nothing."

"Good. At present, attention. How many leagues can you make in a day?"

"Ten, fifteen—twenty, if necessary."

"It will be. Do not lose a word of what I am about to say. On the edge of the ravine between Saint-Reuil and Plédiac there is a large chestnut-tree. You will stop there. You will see no one."

"Which will not hinder somebody's being there. I know."

"You will give the call. Do you know how to give the call?"

Halmalo puffed out his cheeks, turned toward the sea, and there sounded the "to-whit, to-hoo" of an owl.

One would have said it came from the night-locked recesses of a forest. It was sinister and owl-like.

"Good," said the old man. "You have it."

He held out the bow of green silk to Halmalo.

"This is my badge of commandant. It is important that no one should as yet know my name. But this knot will be sufficient. The *fleur-de-lis* was embroidered by Madame Royal in the Temple prison."

Halmalo bent one knee to the ground. He trembled as he took the flower-embroidered knot, and brought it near to his lips, then paused, as if frightened at this kiss.

"Can I?" he demanded.

"Yes; since you kiss the crucifix."

Halmalo kissed the *fleur-de-lis*.

"Rise," said the old man.

Halmalo rose and hid the knot in his breast.

The old man continued: "Listen well to this. This is the order: *Up! Revolt! No quarter!* On the edge of this wood of Saint Aubin you will give the call. You will repeat it thrice. The third time you will see a man spring out of the ground."

"Out of a hole under the trees. I know."

"This man will be Planchenault, who is also called the King's Heart. You will show him this knot. He will understand. Then, by routes which you must find out, you will go to the wood of Astillé; there you will find a cripple, who is surnamed Mousqueton, and who shows pity to none. You will tell him that I love him, and that

he is to set the parishes in motion. From there you will go to the wood of Couesbon, which is a league from Ploërmel. You will give the owl-cry; a man will come out of a hole; it will be Thuault, seneschal of Ploërmel, who has belonged to what is called the Constituent Assembly, but on the good side. You will tell him to arm the castle of Couesbon, which belongs to the Marquis de Guer, a refugee. Ravines, little woods, ground uneven—a good place. Thuault is a clever, straightforward man. Thence you will go to Saint-Ouen-les-Toits, and you will talk with Jean Chouan, who is, in my mind, the real chief. From thence you will go to the wood of Ville-Anglose, where you will see Gutter, whom they call Saint Martin; you will bid him have his eye on a certain Courmesnil, who is the son-in-law of old Goupil de Préfelin, and who leads the Jacobinery of Argentan. Recollect all this. I write nothing, because nothing should be written. La Rouarie made out a list; it ruined all. Then you will go to the wood of Rougefeu, where is Miélette, who leaps the ravine on a long pole.”

“It is called a leaping-pole.”

“Do you know how to use it?”

“Am I not a Breton and a peasant? The *ferte* is our friend. She widens our arms and lengthens our legs.”

“That is to say, she makes the enemy smaller and shortens the route. A good machine.”

“Once on a time, with my *ferte*, I held my own against three salt-tax men who had sabres.”

“When was that?”

“Ten years ago.”

“Under the king?”

“Yes, of course.”

“Then you fought in the time of the king?”

“Yes, to be sure.”

“Against whom?”

“My faith, I do not know! I was a salt smuggler.”

“Very good.”

“They called that fighting against the excise officers. Were they the same thing as the king?”

“Yes. No. But it is not necessary that you should understand.”

“I beg monseigneur’s pardon for having asked a question of monseigneur.”

“Let us continue. Do you know La Tourgue?”

“Do I know La Tourgue? Why, I belong there.”

“How?”

“Certainly, since I come from Parigné.”

“In fact, La Tourgue is near Parigné.”

“Know La Tourgue! The big round castle that belongs to my lord’s family? There is a great iron door which separates the new part from the old that a cannon could not blow open. The famous book about Saint Bartholomew, which people go to look at from curiosity, is in the new building. There are frogs in the moat. When I was little, I used to go and tease them. And the underground passage!—I know that; perhaps there is nobody else left who does.”

“What underground passage? I do not know what you mean.”

“It was made for old times, in the days when La Tourgue was besieged. The people inside could escape by going through the underground passage which leads into the wood.”

“There is a subterranean passage of that description in the castle of Jupellière, and the castle of Hunandaye, and the tower of Champéon; but there is nothing of the sort at La Tourgue.”

“Oh yes, indeed, monseigneur! I do

not know the passages that monseigneur spoke of; I only know that of La Tourgue, because I belong to the neighborhood. Into the bargain, there is nobody but myself who does know it. It was not talked about. It was forbidden, because it had been used in the time of Monsieur de Rohan's wars. My father knew the secret, and showed it to me. I know how to get in and out. If I am in the forest, I can go into the tower, and if I am in the tower, I can go into the forest, without anybody's seeing me. When the enemy enters there is no longer anyone there. That is what the passage of La Tourgue is. Oh, I know it."

The old man remained silent for a moment.

"It is evident that you deceive yourself: if there were such a secret, I should know it."

"Monseigneur, I am certain. There is a stone that turns."

"Ah, good! You peasants believe in stones that turn and stones that sing, and stones that go at night to drink from the neighboring brook. A pack of nonsense."

"But since I have made the stone turn—"

"Just as others have heard it sing. Comrade, La Tourgue is a fortress, sure and strong, easy to defend; but anybody who counted on a subterranean passage for getting out of it would be silly indeed."

"But, Monseigneur—"

The old man shrugged his shoulders. "We are losing time; let us talk of what concerns us."

The peremptory tone cut short Halmalo's persistence.

The unknown resumed: "To continue. Listen. From Rougefeu you will go to the wood of Montchevrier; Bénédicité is

there, the chief of the Twelve. There is another good fellow. He says a blessing while he has people shot. War and sensibility do not go together. From Montchevrier, you will go—"

He broke off. "I forgot the money."

He took from his pocket a purse and a pocket-book, and put them in Halmalo's hand.

"There are thirty thousand livres in assignats in the pocket-book—something like three pounds ten sous; it is true the assignats are false, but the real ones are just as worthless. In the purse—attention—there are a hundred gold louis. I give you all I have. I have no need of anything here. Besides, it is better that no money should be found on me. I resume. From Montchevrier you will go to Autrain, where you will see Monsieur de Frotté; from Autrain to La Jupellière, where you will see De Rochecotte; from La Jupellière to Noirieux, where you will find the Abbé Baudoin. Can you recollect all this?"

"Like my paternoster."

"You will see Monsieur Dubois-Guy at Saint-Briée-en-Cogles, Monsieur de Turpin at Morannes, which is a fortified town, and the Prince de Talmont at Châteaugonthier."

"Will I be spoken to by a prince?"

"Since I speak to you."

Halmalo took off his hat.

"Madame's *fleur-de-lis* will insure you a good reception everywhere. Do not forget that you are going into the country of mountaineers and rustics. Disguise yourself. It will be easy to do. These republicans are so stupid that you may pass anywhere with a blue coat, a three-cornered hat, and a tricolored cockade. There are no longer regiments, there are no longer uniforms; the companies are not numbered; each man puts on any rag

he pleases. You will go to Saint-Mhervé; there you will see Gautier, called Great Peter. You will go to the cantonment of Parné, where the men blacken their faces. They put gravel into their guns, and a double charge of powder, in order to make more noise. It is well done; but tell them, above all, to kill—kill—kill! You will go to the field of the Vache Noire, which is on a height; to the middle of the wood of La Charnie, then to the camp Avoine, then to the camp Vert, then to the camp of the Fourmis. You will go to the Grand Bordage, which is also called the Haut de Pré, and is inhabited by a widow whose daughter married Treton, nicknamed the Englishman. Grand Bordage is in the parish of Quenilles. You will visit Epineux-le-Chevreul, Sillé-le-Guillaume, Parannes, and all the men in all of the woods. You will make friends, and you will send them to the borders of the high and the low Maine; you will see Jean Treton in the parish of Vaisges, Sans Regret at Bignon, Chambord at Bonchamps, the brothers Corbin at Maisoncelles, and the Petit-sans-Leur at Saint-John-on-Erve. He is the one who is called Bourdoiseau. All that done, and the watch-word—*Revolt! no quarter!*—given everywhere, you will join the grand army, the Catholic and royal army, wherever it may be. You will see D'Elbée, De Lescure, De la Rochejacquelein, all the chiefs who may chance to be still living. You will show them my commander's ribbon. They all know what it means. You are only a sailor, but Cathelineau is only a carter. This is what you must say to them from me: 'It is time to join the two wars, the great and the little. The great makes the most noise; the little does the most execution. The Vendée is good,—*Chouannerie* is better; for in civil war the fiercest is the best. The success

of a war is judged by the amount of harm it does.' "

He paused. "Halmalo, I say all this to you. You do not understand the words, but you comprehend the things themselves. I gained confidence in you from seeing you manage the boat. You do not understand geometry, yet you perform sea-manceuvres that are marvelous. He who can manage a boat can pilot an insurrection: from the way in which you have conducted this sea intrigue, I am certain you will fulfill all my commands well. I resume. You will tell the whole to the chiefs, in your own way, of course, but it will be well told. I prefer the war of the forest to the war of the plain; I have no wish to set a hundred thousand peasants in line, and exposed to Carnot's artillery and the grape-shot of the Blues. In less than a month I mean to have five hundred thousand sharpshooters ambushed in the woods. The Republican army is my game. Poaching is our way of waging war. Mine is the strategy of the thickets. Good; there is still another expression you will not catch; no matter, you will seize this: *No quarter, and ambushes everywhere*. I depend more on bush fighting than on regular battles. You will add that the English are with us. We catch the Republic between two fires. Europe assists us. Let us make an end of the Revolution. Kings will wage a war of kingdoms against it; let us wage a war of parishes. You will say this. Have you understood?"

"Yes. Put all to fire and sword."

"That is it."

"No quarter."

"Not to a soul. That is it."

"I will go everywhere."

"And be careful. For in this country it is easy to become a dead man."

"Death does not concern me. He who

takes his first step uses perhaps his last shoes."

"You are a brave fellow."

"And if I am asked monseigneur's name?"

"It must not be known yet. You will say you do not know it, and that will be the truth."

"Where shall I see monseigneur again?"

"Where I shall be."

"How shall I know?"

"Because all the world will know. I shall be talked of before eight days go by; I shall make examples; I shall avenge religion and the king, and you will know well that it is I of whom they speak."

"I understand."

"Forget nothing."

"Be tranquil."

"Now go. May God guide you! Go."

"I will do all that you have bidden me. I will go. I will speak. I will obey. I will command."

"Good."

"And if I succeed—"

"I will make you a knight of Saint Louis."

"Like my brother. And if I fail, you will have me shot?"

"Like your brother."

"Done, monseigneur."

The old man bent his head and seemed to fall into a sombre reverie. When he raised his eyes he was alone. Halmalo was only a black spot disappearing on the horizon.

The sun had just set.

The sea-mews and the hooded gulls flew homeward from the darkening ocean.

That sort of inquietude which precedes the night made itself felt in space. The green frogs croaked; the kingfishers flew whistling out of the pools; the gulls and the rooks kept up their evening tumult;

the cry of the shore birds could be heard, but not a human sound. The solitude was complete. Not a sail in the bay, not a peasant in the fields. As far as the eye could reach stretched a deserted plain. The great sand-thistles shivered. The white sky of twilight cast a vast livid pallor over the shore. In the distance the pools scattered over the plain looked like great sheets of pewter spread flat upon the ground. The wind hurried in from the sea with a moan.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

TELLEMARCH.

CHAPTER I.

THE TOP OF THE DUNE.

THE old man waited till Halmalo disappeared, then he drew his fisherman's cloak closely about him and set out on his course. He walked with slow steps, thinking deeply. He took the direction of Huisnes, while Halmalo went toward Beauvoir.

Behind him, an enormous black triangle, with a cathedral for tiara and a fortress for breastplate, with its two great towers to the east, one round, the other square, helping to support the weight of the church and village, rose Mount Saint Michael, which is to the ocean what the Pyramid of Cheops is to the desert.

The quicksands of Mount Saint Michael's Bay insensibly displace their dunes.* Between Huisnes and Ardevon there was at that time a very high one, which is now completely effaced. This dune, leveled by an equinoctial storm, had the peculiarity of being very ancient; on its summit stood a commemorative column, erected in the twelfth century, in memory of the council held at Avranches against the assassins of Saint Thomas of Canterbury. From the top of this dune the whole district could be seen, and one could fix the points of the compass.

The old man ascended it. When he reached the top, he sat down on one of the projections of the stones, with his back against the pillar, and began to study the kind of geographical chart spread beneath his feet. He seemed to be seeking a route in a district which had once been familiar. In the whole of this vast landscape, made indistinct by the twilight, there was nothing clearly defined but the horizon stretching black against the sky.

He could perceive the roofs of eleven towns and villages; could distinguish for several leagues' distance all the bell-towers of the coast, which were built very high to serve in case of need as landmarks to boats at sea.

At the end of a few minutes the old man appeared to have found what he sought in this dim clearness; his eyes rested on an inclosure of trees, walls, and roofs, partially visible midway between the plain and the wood; it was a farm. He nodded his head in the satisfied way a man does who says to himself,

"There it is," and began to trace with his finger a route across the fields and hedges. From time to time he examined a shapeless, indistinct object stirring on the principal roof of the farm, and seemed to ask himself, "What can it be?" It was colorless and confused, owing to the gloom; it floated—therefore it was not a weather-cock; and there was no reason why it should be a flag.

He was weary; he remained in his resting-place and yielded passively to the vague forgetfulness which the first moments of repose bring over a tired man.

There is an hour of the day which may be called noiseless: it is the serene hour of early evening. It was about him now. He enjoyed it; he looked, he listened—to what? The tranquillity. Even savage natures have their moments of melancholy. Suddenly this tranquillity was not troubled, but accentuated by the voices of persons passing below—the voices of women and children. It was like a chime of joy-bells unexpectedly ringing amid the shadows. The underbrush hid the group from whence the voices came, but it was moving slowly along the foot of the dune toward the plain and the forest. The clear, fresh tones reached distinctly the pensive old man; they were so near that he could catch every word.

A woman's voice said, "We must hurry ourselves, Flécharde. Is this the way?"

"No; yonder."

The dialogue went on between the two voices—one high-pitched, the other low and timid.

"What is the name of the farm we are stopping at?"

"L'Herbe-en-Pail."

* Dunes is the name given to the great sand-hills on the coast of Brittany, Normandy, and Holland.
—*Trans.*

"Will it take us much longer to get there?"

"A good quarter of an hour."

"We must hurry on to get our soup."

"Yes; we are late."

"We shall have to run. But those mites of yours are tired. We are only two women; we can't carry three brats. And you—you are already carrying one, my Flécharde. A regular lump of lead. You have weaned the little gormandizer, but you carry her all the same. A bad habit. Do me the favor to make her walk. Oh, very well—so much the worse! The soup will be cold."

"Oh, what good shoes these are that you gave me! I should think they had been made for me."

"It is better than going barefooted, eh?"

"Hurry up, René-Jean!"

"He is the very one that hindered us. He must needs chatter with all the little peasant girls he met. Oh, he shows the man already!"

"Yes, indeed; why, he is going on five years old."

"I say, René-Jean, what made you talk to that little girl in the village?"

A child's voice—that of a boy—replied, "Because she was an acquaintance of mine."

"What, you know her?" asked the woman.

"Yes, ever since this morning; she played some games with me."

"Oh! what a man you are!" cried the woman. "We have only been three days in the neighborhood; that creature there is no bigger than your fist, and he has found a sweetheart already!"

The voices grew fainter and fainter; then every sound died away.

CHAPTER II.

AURES HABET, ET NON AUDIET.

THE old man sat motionless. He was not thinking, scarcely dreaming. About him was serenity, rest, safety, solitude. It was still broad daylight on the dune, but almost dark in the plain, and quite night in the forest. The moon was floating up the east; a few stars dotted the pale blue of the zenith. This man, though full of preoccupation and stern cares, lost himself in the ineffable sweetness of the infinite. He felt within him the obscure dawn of hope, if the word hope may be applied to the workings of civil warfare. For the instant it seemed to him that, in escaping from that inexorable sea, and touching land one more, all danger had vanished. No one knew his name; he was alone, escaped from the enemy, having left no trace behind him, for the sea leaves no track; hidden, ignored; not even suspected. He felt an indescribable calm; a little more and he would have fallen asleep.

What made the strange charm of this tranquil home to that man, a prey within and without to such tumults, was the profound silence alike in earth and sky.

He heard nothing but the wind from the sea; but the wind is a continual bass, which almost ceases to be a noise, so accustomed does the ear become to its tone.

Suddenly he started to his feet.

His attention had been quickly awakened; he looked about the horizon. Then his glance fixed eagerly upon a particular point. What he looked at was the belfry of Cormeray, which rose before him at the extremity of the plain. Something very extraordinary was indeed going on within it.

The belfry was clearly defined against

the sky; he could see the tower surmounted by the spire, and between the two the cage for the bell, square, without penthouse, open at the four sides after the fashion of Breton belfries.

Now this cage appeared alternately to open and shut at regular intervals; its lofty opening showed entirely white, then black; the sky could be seen for an instant through it, then it disappeared; a gleam of light would come, then an eclipse, and the opening and shutting succeeded each other from moment to moment with the regularity of a hammer striking its anvil. This belfry of Cormeray was in front of the old man, about two leagues from the place where he stood. He looked to his right at the belfry of Baguer-Pican, which rose equally straight and distinct against the horizon: its cage was opening and shutting, like that of Cormeray.

He looked to his left, at the belfry of Tanis: the cage of the belfry of Tanis opened and shut, like that of Baguer-Pican. He examined all the belfries upon the horizon, one after another: to his left those of Courtils, of Prec  y, of Crollon, and the Croix-Avranchin; to his right the belfries of Raz-sur-Couesnon, of Mordrey, and of the Pas; in front of him, the belfry of Pontorsin. The cages of all these belfries were alternately white and black.

What did this mean?

It meant that all the bells were swinging. In order to appear and disappear in this way they must be violently rung.

What was it for? The tocsin, without doubt.

The tocsin was sounding, sounding madly—on every side, from all the belfries, in all the parishes, in all the villages; and yet he could hear nothing.

This was owing to the distance and the

wind from the sea, which, sweeping in the opposite direction, carried every sound of the shore out beyond the horizon.

All these mad bells calling on every side, and at the same time this silence; nothing could be more sinister.

The old man looked and listened. He did not hear the tocsin; he saw it. It was a strange sensation, that of seeing the tocsin.

Against whom was this rage of the bells directed? Against whom did this tocsin sound?

CHAPTER III.

USEFULNESS OF BIG LETTERS.

ASSUREDLY some one was snarled. Who?

A shiver ran through this man of steel. It could not be he? His arrival could not have been discovered: it was impossible that the acting representative should have received information; he had scarcely landed. The corvette had evidently foundered, and not a man had escaped. And even on the corvette, Boisberthelot and La Vieuville alone knew his name. The belfries kept up their savage sport. He mechanically watched and counted them, and his meditations, pushed from one conjecture to another, had those fluctuations caused by a sudden change from complete security to a terrible consciousness of peril. Still, after all, this tocsin might be accounted for in many ways, and he ended by reassuring himself with the repetition of—"In short, no one knows of my arrival, and no one knows my name."

During the last few seconds there had

been a slight noise above and behind him. This noise was like the fluttering of leaves. He paid no attention to it at first, but as the sound continued—one might have said insisted on making itself heard—he turned round at length. It was in fact a leaf, but a leaf of paper. The wind was trying to tear off a large placard pasted on the stone above his head. This placard had been very lately fastened there, for it was still moist, and offered a hold to the wind, which had begun to play with and was detaching it.

The old man had ascended the dune on the opposite side, and had not seen this placard as he came up.

He stepped onto the coping where he had been seated, and laid his hand on the corner of the paper which the wind moved. The sky was clear, for the June twilights are long; the bottom of the dune was shadowy, but the top in light; a portion of the placard was printed in large letters, and there was still light enough for him to make it out. He read this:

“THE FRENCH REPUBLIC ONE AND
INDIVISIBLE.

“We, Prieur of the Marne, acting representative of the people for the army of the coast of Cherbourg, give notice: The *ci-devant* Marquis de Lantenac, Viscount de Fontenay, so-called Breton prince, secretly landed on the coast of Granville, is declared an outlaw. A price is set on his head. Any person bringing him, alive or dead, will receive the sum of sixty thousand livres. This amount will not be paid in assignats, but in gold. A battalion of the Cherbourg coast-guards will be immediately dispatched for the apprehension of the so-called Marquis de Lantenac.

“The parishes are ordered to lend every assistance.

“Given at the Town-hall of Granville, this 2d of June, 1793.

“(Signed) PRIEUR DE LA MARNE.”

Under this name was another signature, in much smaller characters, and which the failing light prevented the old man’s deciphering.

It was unsafe to remain longer on this summit. He had perhaps already stayed too long; the top of the dune was the only point in the landscape which still remained visible.

When he reached the obscurity of the bottom, he slackened his pace. He took the route which he had traced for himself toward the farm, evidently having reason to believe that he should be safe in that direction.

The plain was deserted. There were no passers-by at that hour. He stopped behind a thicket of underbrush, undid his cloak, turned his vest the hairy side out, refastened his rag of a mantle about his neck by its cord, and resumed his way.

The moon was shining.

He reached a point where two roads branched off; an old stone cross stood there. Upon the pedestal of the cross he could distinguish a white square which was most probably a notice like that he had just read. He went toward it.

“Where are you going?” said a voice.

He turned round. A man was standing in the hedge-row, tall like himself, old like himself, with white hair like his own, and garments even more dilapidated—almost his double. This man leaned on a long stick.

He repeated: “I ask you where you are going?”

“In the first place, where am I?”

returned he, with an almost haughty composure.

The man replied: "You are in the seignury of Tanis. I am its beggar; you are its lord."

"I?"

"Yes, you, my Lord Marquis de Lantenac."

CHAPTER IV.

THE CAIMAND.

THE Marquis de Lantenac—we shall henceforth call him by his name—answered quietly, "So be it. Give me up."

The man continued, "We are both at home here: you in the castle, I in the bushes."

"Let us finish. Do your work. Betray me," said the marquis.

The man went on: "You were going to the farm of Herbe-en-Pail, were you not?"

"Yes."

"Do not go."

"Why?"

"Because the Blues are there."

"Since how long?"

"These three days."

"Did the people of the farm and the hamlet resist?"

"No; they opened all the doors."

"Ah!" said the marquis.

The man pointed with his finger toward the roof of the farm house, which could be perceived above the trees at a short distance.

"You can see the roof, marquis?"

"Yes."

"Do you see what there is above it?"

"Something floating?"

"Yes."

"It is a flag."

"The tricolor," said the man.

This was the object which had attracted the marquis's attention as he stood on the top of the dune.

"Is not the tocsin sounding?" asked the marquis.

"Yes."

"On what account?"

"Evidently on yours."

"But I can not hear it."

"The wind carries the sound the other way."

The man added: "Did you see your placard?"

"Yes."

"They are hunting you;" and casting a glance toward the farm, he added—"There is a demi-battalion there."

"Of republicans?"

"Parisians."

"Very well," said the marquis; "march on." And he took a step in the direction of the farm.

The man seized his arm. "Do not go there."

"Where do you wish me to go?"

"Home with me."

The marquis looked steadily at the mendicant.

"Listen, my lord marquis. My house is not fine; but it is safe. A cabin lower than a cave. For flooring a bed of seaweed, for ceiling a roof of branches and grass. Come. At the farm you will be shot. In my house you may go to sleep. You must be tired; and to-morrow morning the Blues will march on, and you can go where you please."

The marquis studied this man. "Which side are you on?" he asked. "Are you republican? Are you royalist?"

"I am a beggar."

"Neither royalist nor republican?"

"I believe not."

"Are you for or against the king?"

"I have no time for that sort of thing."

"What do you think of what is passing?"

"I have nothing to live on."

"Still you come to my assistance."

"Because I saw you were outlawed. What is the law? So one can be beyond its pale. I do not comprehend. Am I inside the law? Am I outside the law? I don't in the least know. To die of hunger—is that being within the law?"

"How long have you been dying of hunger?"

"All my life."

"And you save me?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because I said to myself, 'There is one poorer than I. I have the right to breathe; he has not.'"

"That is true. And you save me?"

"Of course; we are brothers, monseigneur. I ask for bread—you ask for life. We are a pair of beggars."

"But do you know there is a price set on my head?"

"Yes."

"How did you know?"

"I read the placard."

"You know how to read?"

"Yes; and to write, too. Why should I be a brute?"

"Then since you can read, and since you have seen the notice, you know that a man would earn sixty thousand livres by giving me up?"

"I know it."

"Not in assignats."

"Yes, I know; in gold."

"Sixty thousand livres—do you know it is a fortune?"

"Yes."

"And that anybody apprehending me would make his fortune?"

"Very well—what next?"

"His fortune!"

"That is exactly what I thought. When I saw you, I said: 'Just to think that anybody by giving up that man yonder would gain sixty thousand livres, and make his fortune!' Let us hasten to hide him."

The marquis followed the beggar.

They entered a thicket; the mendicant's den was there. It was a sort of chamber which a great old oak had allowed the man to take possession of within its heart; it was dug down among its roots, and covered by its branches. It was dark, low, hidden, invisible. There was room for two persons.

"I foresaw that I might have a guest," said the mendicant.

This species of underground lodging, less rare in Brittany than people fancy, is called in the peasant dialect a *carnichot*. The name is also applied to hiding-places contrived in thick walls.

It was furnished with a few jugs, a pallet of straw or dried wrack, with a thick covering of kersey; some tallow-dips, a flint and steel, and a bundle of furze twigs for tinder.

They stooped low, crept rather, penetrated into the chamber; which the great roots of the tree divided into fantastic compartments, and seated themselves on the heap of dry seaweed which served as a bed. The space between two of the roots, which made the doorway, allowed a little light to enter. Night had come on, but the eye adapts itself to the darkness, and one always finds at last a little day among the shadows. A reflection from the moon's rays dimly silvered the entrance. In a corner was a jug of water, a loaf of buckwheat bread, and some chestnuts.

"Let us sup," said the beggar.

They divided the chestnuts; the marquis contributed his morsel of biscuit; they bit into the same black loaf, and drank out of the jug, one after the other.

They conversed. The marquis began to question this man.

"So, no matter whether anything or nothing happens, it is all the same to you?"

"Pretty much. You are the lords, you others. Those are your affairs."

"But after all, present events—"

"Pass away up out of my reach."

The beggar added presently, "Then there are things that go on still higher up: the sun that rises, the moon that increases or diminishes; those are the matters I occupy myself about."

He took a sip from the jug, and said, "The good fresh water!"

Then he asked, "How do you find the water, monseigneur?"

"What is your name?" inquired the marquis.

"My name is Tellemarch; but I am called the *Caimand*."

"I understand. *Caimand* is a word of the district."

"Which means beggar. I am also nicknamed *Le Vieux*. I have been called the old man these forty years."

"Forty years! But you were a young man then."

"I never was young. You remain so always, on the contrary, my lord marquis. You have the legs of a boy of twenty; you can climb the great dune; as for me, I begin to find it difficult to walk; at the end of a quarter of a league I am tired. Nevertheless, our age is the same. But the rich, they have an advantage over us—they eat every day. Eating is a preservative."

After a silence the mendicant resumed.

"Poverty, riches—that makes a terrible business. That is what brings on the catastrophies. At least, I have that idea. The poor want to be rich; the rich are not willing to be poor. I think that is about what it is at the bottom. I do not mix myself up with matters. The events are the events. I am neither for the creditor nor for the debtor. I know there is a debt, and that it is being paid. That is all. I would rather they had not killed the king; but it would be difficult for me to say why. After that, somebody will answer, 'But remember how they used to hang poor fellows on trees for nothing at all.' See; just for a miserable gunshot fired at one of the king's roebucks, I myself saw a man hung who had a wife and seven children. There is much to say on both sides."

Again he was silent for awhile. Then—"I am a little of a bone-setter, a little of a doctor; I know the herbs, I study plants; the peasants see me absent—pre-occupied—and that makes me pass for a sorcerer. Because I dream, they think I must be wise."

"You belong to the neighborhood?" asked the marquis.

"I never was out of it."

"You know me?"

"Of course. The last time I saw you was when you passed through here two years ago. You went from here to England. A little while since I saw a man on the top of the dune—a very tall man. Tall men are rare; Brittany is a country of small men. I looked close; I had read the notice; I said to myself, 'Ah, ha!' And when you came down there was moonlight, and I recognized you."

"And yet I do not know you."

"You have seen me, but you never looked at me."

And Tellemarch the Caimond added—

"I looked at you, though. The giver and the beggar do not look with the same eyes."

"Had I encountered you formerly?"

"Often—I am your beggar. I was the mendicant at the foot of the road from your castle. You have given me alms, but he who gives does not notice; he who receives examines and observes. When you say mendicant, you say spy. But as for me, though I am often sad, I try not to be a malicious spy. I used to hold out my hand; you only saw the hand, and you threw into it the charity I needed in the morning in order that I might not die in the evening. I have often been twenty-four hours without eating. Sometimes a penny is life. I owe you my life—I pay the debt."

"That is true; you save me."

"Yes, I save you, monseigneur."

And Tellemarch's voice grew solemn as he added—"On one condition."

"And that?"

"That you are not come here to do harm."

"I come here to do good," said the marquis.

"Let us sleep," said the beggar.

They lay down side by side on the seaweed bed. The mendicant fell asleep immediately. The marquis, although very tired, remained thinking deeply for a few moments—he gazed fixedly at the beggar in the shadow, and then lay back. To lie on that bed was to lie on the ground; he projected by this to put his ear to the earth and listen. He could hear a strange buzzing underground. We know that sound stretches down into the depths: he could hear the noise of the bells. The tocsin was still sounding.

The marquis fell asleep.

CHAPTER V.

SIGNED GAUVAIN.

It was delightful when he awoke. The mendicant was standing up—not in the den, for he could not hold himself erect there—but without, on the sill. He was leaning on his stick. The sun shone upon his face.

"Monseigneur," said Tellemarch, "four o'clock has just sounded from the belfry of Tanis. I could count the strokes. Therefore the wind has changed: it is the land breeze; I can hear no other sound, so the tocsin has ceased. Everything is tranquil about the farm and hamlet of Herbe-en-Pail. The Blues are asleep or gone. The worst of the danger is over; it will be wise for us to separate. It is my hour for setting out."

He indicated a point in the horizon. "I am going that way."

He pointed in the opposite direction. "Go you this way."

The beggar made the Marquis a gesture of salute. He pointed to the remains of the supper. "Take the chestnuts with you if you are hungry."

A moment after he disappeared among the trees.

The marquis rose and departed in the direction which Tellemarch had indicated.

It was that charming hour called in the old Norman peasant dialect "the song-sparrow of the day." The finches and the hedge-sparrows flew chirping about. The marquis followed the path by which they had come on the previous night. He passed out of the thicket and found himself at the fork of the road, marked by the stone cross. The placard was still there, looking white, fairly gay, in the rising sun. He remembered that there was something at the bottom of the placard which he had not been able

to read the evening before, on account of the twilight and the size of the letters. He went up to the pedestal of the cross. Under the signature "PRIEUR DE LA MARNE," there were yet two other lines in small characters :

"The identity of the ci-devant Marquis de Lantenac established, he will be immediately shot. Signed: Chief of battalion commanding the exploring column, GAUVAIN."

"Gauvain!" said the marquis. He stood still thinking deeply, his eyes fixed on the notice. "Gauvain!" he repeated.

He resumed his march; turned about; looked again at the cross, walked back, and once more read the placard.

Then he went slowly away. Had any person been near, he might have been heard to murmur, in a half-voice, "Gauvain."

From the sunken paths into which he retreated he could only see the roofs of the farm which lay to the left. He passed along the side of a steep eminence covered with furze, of the species called long-thorn, in blossom. The summit of this height was one of those points of land named in Brittany a *hure* (head).

At the foot of the eminence the gaze lost itself among the trees. The foliage seemed bathed in light. All nature was filled with the deep joy of the morning.

Suddenly this landscape became terrible. It was like the bursting forth of an ambushade. An appalling, indescribable trumpeting, made by savage cries and gun-shots, struck upon these fields and these woods filled with sunlight, and there could be seen rising from the side toward the farm a great smoke, cut by clear flames, as if the hamlet and the farm buildings were consuming like a truss of burning straw. It was sudden

and fearful; the abrupt change from tranquillity to fury; an explosion of hell in the midst of dawn; a horror without transition. There was fighting in the direction of Herbe-en-Pail. The marquis stood still.

There is no man in a similar case who would not feel curiosity stronger than a sense of the peril. One must know what is happening, if one perish in the attempt. He mounted the eminence along the bottom of which passed the sunken path by which he had come. From there he could see, but he could also be seen. He remained on the top for some instants. He looked about.

There was, in truth, a fusillade and a conflagration. He could hear the cries, he could see the flames. The farm appeared the centre of some terrible catastrophe. What could it be? Was the farm of Herbe-en-Pail attacked? But by whom? Was it a battle? Was it not rather a military execution? Very often the Blues punished refractory farms and villages by setting them on fire. They were ordered to do so by a revolutionary decree; they burned, for example, every farm-house and hamlet where the tree-cutting prescribed by law had been neglected, or no roads opened among the thickets for the passage of the republican cavalry. Only very lately, the parish of Bourgon, near Ernée, had been thus destroyed. Was Herbe-en-Pail receiving similar treatment? It was evident that none of the strategic routes called for by the decree had been made among the copses and inclosures. Was this the punishment for such neglect? Had an order been received by the advance-guard occupying the farm? Did not this troop make part of one of those exploring divisions called the "infernal columns?"

A bristling and savage thicket sur-

rounded on all sides the eminence upon which the marquis had posted himself for an outlook. This thicket, which was called the grove of Herbe-en-Pail, but which had the proportions of a wood, stretched to the farm, and concealed, like all Breton copses, a network of ravines, by-paths, and deep cuttings, labyrinths where the republican armies lost themselves.

The execution, if it were an execution, must have been a ferocious one, for it was short. It had been, like all brutal deeds, quickly accomplished. The atrocity of civil wars admits of these savage vagaries. While the marquis, multiplying conjectures, hesitating to descend, hesitating to remain, listened and watched, this crash of extermination ceased, or, more correctly speaking, vanished. The marquis took note of something in the thicket that was like the scattering of a wild and joyous troop. A frightful rushing about made itself heard beneath the trees. From the farm the band had thrown themselves into the wood. Drums beat. No more gunshots were fired. Now it resembled a battue; they seemed to search, follow, track. They were evidently hunting some person; the noise was scattered and deep; it was a confusion of words of wrath and triumph; of indistinct cries and clamor. Suddenly, as an outline becomes visible in a cloud of smoke, something is articulated clearly and distinctly amid this tumult: it was a name—a name repeated by a thousand voices—and the marquis plainly heard this cry:

“Lantenac! Lantenac! The Marquis de Lantenac!”

It was he whom they were hunting.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WHIRLIGIGS OF CIVIL WAR.

SUDDENLY all about him, from all sides at the same time, the copse filled with muskets, bayonets, and sabres, a tri-colored flag rose in the half-light, the cry of “Lantenac!” burst forth in his very ear, and at his feet, behind the brambles and branches, savage faces appeared.

The marquis was alone, standing on a height, visible from every part of the wood. He could scarcely see those who shrieked his name; but he was seen by all. If a thousand muskets were in the wood, there was he like a target. He could distinguish nothing among the brushwood but burning eyeballs fastened upon him.

He took off his hat, turned back the brim, tore a long, dry thorn from a furze-bush, drew from his pocket a white cockade, fastened the upturned brim and the cockade to the hat with the thorn, and putting back on his head the hat, whose lifted edge showed the white cockade, and left his face in full view, he cried in a loud voice that rang like a trumpet through the forest—

“I am the man you seek. I am the Marquis de Lantenac, Viscount de Fontenay, Breton prince, lieutenant-general of the armies of the king. Now make an end! Aim! Fire!” And, tearing open with both hands his goat-skin vest, he bared his naked breast.

He looked down, expecting to meet leveled guns, and saw himself surrounded by kneeling men. Then a great shout arose:

“Long live Lantenac! Long live mon-seigneur! Long live the general!”

At the same time hats were flung into the air, sabres whirled joyously, and

through all the thicket could be seen rising sticks on whose points waved caps of brown woolen. He was surrounded by a Vendean band. This troop had knelt at sight of him.

Old legends tell of strange beings that were found in the ancient Thuringian forests—a race of giants, more and less than men, who were regarded by the Romans as horrible monsters, by the Germans as divine incarnations, and who, according to the encounter, ran the risk of being exterminated or adored.

The marquis felt something of the sentiment which must have shaken one of those creatures when, expecting to be treated like a monster, he suddenly found himself worshipped as a god. All those eyes, full of terrible lightnings, were fastened on him with a sort of savage love.

This crowd was armed with muskets, sabres, scythes, poles, sticks; they wore great beavers or brown caps, with white cockades, a profusion of rosaries and amulets; wide breeches open at the knee, jackets of skins, leather gaiters, the calves of their legs bare, their hair long; some with a ferocious look, all with an open one.

A man, young and of noble mien, passed through the kneeling throng, and hurried toward the marquis. Like the peasants, he wore a turned-up beaver and a white cockade, and was wrapped in a fur jacket; but his hands were white and his linen fine, and he wore over his vest a white silk scarf, from which hung a gold-hilted sword.

When he reached the hure, he threw aside his hat, untied his scarf, bent one knee to the ground, and presented the sword and scarf to the marquis, saying,

"We were indeed seeking you, and we have found you. Accept the sword of command. These men are yours now. I was their leader; I mount in grade,

for I become your soldier. Accept our homage, my lord. General, give me your orders."

Then he made a sign, and the men who carried a tricolored flag moved out of the wood. They marched up to where the marquis stood, and laid the banner at his feet. It was the flag which he had just caught sight of through the trees.

"General," said the young man who had presented to him the sword and scarf, "this is the flag we just took from the Blues, who held the farm of Herbe-en-Pail. Monseigneur, I am named Gavard. I belong to the Marquis de la Rouarie."

"It is well," said the marquis. And, calm and grave, he put on the scarf. Then he drew his sword, and waving it above his head, he cried—

"Up! Long live the king!"

All rose. Through the depths of the wood swelled a wild triumphant clamor: "*Long live the king! Long live our marquis! Long live Lantenac!*"

The marquis turned toward Gavard—"How many are you?"

"Seven thousand."

And as they descended the eminence, while the peasants cleared away the furze-bushes to make a path for the Marquis de Lantenac, Gavard continued: "Monseigneur, nothing more simple. All can be explained in a word. It only needed a spark. The reward offered by the Republic, in revealing your presence, roused the whole district for the king. Besides that, we had been secretly warned by the mayor of Granville, who is one of our men, the same who saved the Abbé Olivier. Last night they sounded the tocsin."

"For whom?"

"For you."

"Ah!" said the marquis.

"And here we are," pursued Gavard.

"And you are seven thousand?"

"To-day. We shall be fifteen thousand to-morrow. It is the Breton contingent. When Monsieur Henri de la Rochejacquelein set out to join the Catholic army, the tocsin was sounded, and in one night six parishes—Iternay, Corqueux, the Echaubroignes, the Aubiers, Saint-Aubin, and Nueil—brought him ten thousand men. They had no munitions; they found in the house of a quarry-master sixty pounds of blasting-powder, and M. de la Rochejacquelein set off with that. We were certain you must be in some part of this forest, and we were seeking you."

"And you attacked the Blues at the farm of Herbe-en-Pail?"

"The wind prevented their hearing the tocsin. They suspected nothing; the people of the hamlet, who are a set of clowns, received them well. This morning we surrounded the farm, the Blues were asleep, and we did the thing out of hand. I have a horse. Will you deign to accept it, general?"

"Yes."

A peasant led up a white horse with military caparisons.

The marquis mounted without the assistance Gavard offered him.

"Hurrah!" cried the peasants. The cries of the English were greatly in use along the Breton coast, in constant communication as it was with the Channel Islands.

Gavard made a military salute, and asked, "Where will you make your headquarters, monseigneur?"

"At first in the Forest of Fougères."

"It is one of your seven forests, my lord marquis."

"We must have a priest."

"We have one."

"Who?"

"The curate of the Chapelle-Erbrée."

"I know him. He has made the voyage to Jersey."

A priest stepped out of the ranks, and said, "Three times."

The marquis turned his head. "Good-morning, Monsieur le Curé. You have work before you."

"So much the better, my lord marquis."

"You will have to hear confessions. Those who wish. Nobody will be forced."

"My lord marquis," said the priest, "at Guéménée, Gaston forces the republicans to confess."

"He is a hairdresser," said the marquis; "death ought to be free."

Gavard, who had gone to give some orders, returned.

"General, I wait your commands."

"First, the rendezvous in the Forest of Fougères. Let the men disperse, and make their way there."

"The order is given."

"Did you not tell me that the people of Herbe-en-Pail had received the Blues well?"

"Yes, general."

"You have burned the house?"

"Yes."

"Have you burned the hamlet?"

"No."

"Burn it."

"The Blues tried to defend themselves, but they were a hundred and fifty, and we were seven thousand."

"Who were they?"

"Santerre's men."

"The one who ordered the drums to beat while the king's head was being cut off? Then it is a regiment of Paris."

"A half-regiment."

"It's name?"

"General, it had on its flag, 'Battalion of the Bonnet Rouge.'"

"Wild beasts."

"What is to be done with the wounded?"

"Put an end to them."

"What shall we do with the prisoners?"

"Shoot them."

"There are about eighty."

"Shoot the whole."

"There are two women."

"Them also."

"There are three children."

"Carry them off. We will see what shall be done with them."

And the marquis rode on.

CHAPTER VII.

"NO MERCY!" (WATCHWORD OF THE COMMUNE)—"NO QUARTER!" (WATCHWORD OF THE ROYAL PARTY).

WHILE all this was passing near Tanis, the mendicant had gone toward Crollon. He plunged into the ravines, among the vast silent bowers of shade, inattentive to everything, and attentive to nothing, as he had himself said; dreamer rather than thinker, for the thoughtful man has an aim, and the dreamer has none; wandering, rambling, pausing, munching here and there a bunch of wild sorrel; drinking at the springs, occasionally raising his head to listen to the distant tumult, again falling back into the bewildering fascination of nature, warming his rags in the sun, hearing sometimes the noise of men, but listening to the song of the birds.

He was old, and moved slowly; he could not walk far; as he had said to the Marquis de Lantenac, a quarter of a league fatigued him; he made a short circuit to the Croix-Avranchin, and even-
ing had come before he returned.

A little beyond Macée, the path he was following led to a sort of culminating

point, bare of trees, from whence one could see very far, taking in the whole stretch of the western horizon to the sea.

A column of smoke attracted his attention.

Nothing calmer than smoke, but nothing more startling. There are peaceful smokes, and there are evil ones. The thickness and color of a line of smoke marks the whole difference between war and peace, between fraternity and hatred, between hospitality and the tomb, between life and death. A smoke mounting among the trees may be a symbol of all that is most charming in the world—a hearth at home; or a sign of that which is most awful—a conflagration. The whole happiness of man, or his most complete misery, is sometimes expressed in this thin vapor, which the wind scatters at will.

The smoke which Tellemarch saw was disquieting.

It was black, dashed now and then with sudden gleams of red, as if the brasier from which it flowed burned irregularly, and had begun to die out; and it rose above Herbe-en-Pail.

Tellemarch quickened his steps, and walked toward this smoke.

He was very tired, but he must know what this signified.

He reached the summit of a hill, against whose side the hamlet and the farm were nestled.

There was no longer either farm or hamlet.

A heap of ruins was burning still—it was Herbe-en-Pail.

There is something which it is more painful to see burn than a palace—it is a cottage. A cottage on fire is a lamentable sight. It is a devastation swooping down on poverty, the vulture pouncing upon the worms of the ground; there is

in it a contradiction which chills the heart.

If we believe the Biblical legend, the sight of a conflagration changed a human being into a statue: for a moment Tellemarch seemed thus transformed. The spectacle before his eyes held him motionless. Destruction was completing its work amid unbroken silence. Not a cry arose; not a human sigh mingled with this smoke; this furnace labored, and finished devouring the village, without any noise being heard save the creaking of the timbers and the crackling of the thatch. At moments the smoke parted, the fallen roofs revealed the gaping chambers, the brasier showed all its rubies; rags turned to scarlet, and miserable bits of furniture, tinted with purple, gleamed amid these vermilion interiors, and Tellemarch was dizzied by the sinister bedazzlement of disaster.

Some trees of a chestnut grove near the houses had taken fire, and were blazing.

He listened, trying to catch the sound of a voice, an appeal, a cry; nothing stirred except the flames; everything was silent, save the conflagration. Was it that all had fled?

Where was the knot of people who lived and toiled at Herbe-en-Pail? What had become of this little band? Tellemarch descended the hill.

A funereal enigma rose before him. He approached without haste, with fixed eyes. He advanced toward this ruin with the slowness of a shadow; he felt like a ghost in this tomb.

He reached what had been the door of the farm-house, and looked into the court, which had no longer any walls, and was confounded with the hamlet grouped about it.

What he had before seen was nothing.

He had hitherto only caught sight of the terrible; the horrible appeared to him now.

In the middle of the court was a black heap, vaguely outlined on one side by the flames, on the other by the moonlight. This heap was a mass of men; these men were dead.

All about this human mound spread a great pool, which smoked a little; the flames were reflected in this pool, but it had no need of fire to redden it—it was blood.

Tellemarch went closer. He began to examine these prostrate bodies one after another: they were all dead men.

The moon shone; the conflagration also.

These corpses were the bodies of soldiers. All had their feet bare; their shoes had been taken; their weapons were gone also; they still wore their uniforms, which were blue; here and there he could distinguish among these heaped-up limbs and heads shot-riddled hats with tricolored cockades. They were republicans. They were those Parisians who on the previous evening had been there, all living, keeping garrison at the farm of Herbe-en-Pail. These men had been executed: this was shown by the symmetrical position of the bodies; they had been struck down in order, and with care. They were all quite dead. Not a single death-gasp sounded from the mass.

Tellemarch passed the corpses in review without omitting one; they were all riddled with balls.

Those who had shot them, in haste probably to get elsewhere, had not taken the time to bury them.

As he was preparing to move away, his eyes fell on a low wall in the court, and he saw four feet protruding from one of its angles.

They had shoes on them; they were smaller than the others. Tellemarch went up to this spot. They were women's feet. Two women were lying side by side behind the wall; they also had been shot.

Tellemarch stooped over them. One of the women wore a sort of uniform; by her side was a canteen, bruised and empty; she had been vivandière. She had four balls in her head. She was dead.

Tellemarch examined the other. This was a peasant. She was livid; her mouth open. Her eyes were closed. There was no wound in her head. Her garments, which long marches, no doubt, had worn to rags, were disarranged by her fall, leaving her bosom half naked. Tellemarch pushed her dress aside, and saw on one shoulder the round wound which a ball makes; the shoulder-blade was broken. He looked at her livid breast.

"Nursing mother," he murmured.

He touched her. She was not cold. She had no hurts beside the broken shoulder-blade and the wound in the shoulder.

He put his hand on her heart, and felt a faint throb. She was not dead. Tellemarch raised himself, and cried out in a terrible voice: "Is there no one here?"

"Is it you, Caimand?" a voice replied, so low that it could scarcely be heard. At the same time a head was thrust out of a hole in the ruin. Then another face appeared at another aperture. They were two peasants, who had hidden themselves—the only ones who survived.

The well-known voice of the Caimand had reassured them, and brought them out of the holes in which they had taken refuge.

They advanced toward the old man, both still trembling violently.

Tellemarch had been able to cry out, but he could not talk; strong emotions produce such effects. He pointed out to

them with his finger the woman stretched at his feet.

"Is there still life in her?" asked one of the peasants.

Tellemarch gave an affirmative nod of the head.

"Is the other woman living?" demanded the second man.

Tellemarch shook his head.

The peasant who had first shown himself continued: "All the others are dead, are they not? I saw the whole. I was in my cellar. How one thanks God at such a moment for not having a family! My house burned. Blessed Saviour! They killed everybody. This woman here had three children—all little. The children cried—'Mother!' The mother cried—'My children!' Those who massacred everybody are gone. They were satisfied. They carried off the little ones, and shot the mother. I saw it all. But she is not dead—didn't you say so? She is not dead? Tell us, Caimand, do you think you could save her? Do you want us to help carry her to your *carnichot*?"

Tellemarch made a sign, which signified "Yes."

The wood was close to the farm. They quickly made a litter with branches and ferns. They laid the woman, still motionless, upon it, and set out toward the copse, the two peasants carrying the litter, one at the head the other at the feet, Tellemarch holding the woman's arm, and feeling her pulse.

As they walked, the two peasants talked; and over the body of the bleeding woman, whose white face was lighted up by the moon, they exchanged frightful ejaculations.

"To kill all!"

"To burn everything!"

"Ah, my God! Is that the way things will go now?"

"It was that tall old man who ordered it to be done."

"Yes; it was he who commanded."

"I did not see while the shooting went on. Was he there?"

"No. He had gone. But no matter; it was all done by his orders."

"Then it was he who did the whole."

"He said, 'Kill! burn! no quarter!'"

"He is a marquis."

"Of course, since he is our marquis."

"How is it they call him now?"

"He is the lord of Lantenac."

Tellemarch raised his eyes to heaven, and murmured:

"If I had known!"

PART THE SECOND.

IN PARIS.

BOOK THE FIRST.

CIMOURDAIN.

CHAPTER I.

THE STREETS OF PARIS AT THAT TIME.

PEOPLE lived in public; they ate at tables spread outside the doors; women seated on the steps of the churches made lint as they sang the *Marseillaise*. Park Monceaux and the Luxembourg Gardens were parade-grounds. There were gunsmiths' shops in full work; they manufactured muskets before the eyes of the passers-by, who clapped their hands in applause. The watchword on every lip was, "*Patience; we are in Revolution.*" The people smiled heroically. They went to the theatre as they did at Athens dur-

ing the Peloponnesian war. One saw play-bills such as these pasted at the street corners:—"The Siege of Thionville;" "A Mother saved from the Flames;" "The Club of the Careless;" "The Eldest of the Popes Joan;" "The Philosopher-Soldiers;" "The Art of Village Love-making."

The Germans were at the gates; a report was current that the King of Prussia had secured boxes at the Opera. Everything was terrible, and no one was frightened. The mysterious law against the suspected, which was the crime of Merlin of Douai, held a vision of the guillotine above every head. A solicitor named Lèran, who had been denounced, awaited his arrest in dressing-gown and slippers, playing his flute at his window. Nobody seemed to have leisure: all the world was in a hurry. Every hat bore a cockade. The women said, "We are pretty in red

caps." All Paris seemed to be removing. The curiosity shops were crowded with crowns, mitres, sceptres of gilded wood, and *fleurs-de-lis*—torn down from royal dwellings: it was the demolition of monarchy that went on. Copes were to be seen for sale at the old clothesmen's, and rochets hung on hooks at their doors. At Ramponneau's and the Poncherons, men dressed out in surplices and stoles, and mounted on donkeys caparisoned with chasubles, drank wine at the doors from cathedral ciboria. In the Rue Saint Jacques, barefooted street-pavers stopped the wheelbarrow of a peddler who had boots for sale, and clubbed together to buy fifteen pairs of shoes, which they sent to the Convention "for our soldiers."

Busts of Franklin, Rousseau, Brutus, and, we must add, of Marat, abounded. Under a bust of Marat in the Rue Cloche-Perce was hung in a black wooden frame, and under glass, an address against Malouet, with testimony in support of the charges, and these marginal lines:

"These details were furnished me by the mistress of Silvain Bailly, a good patriotess, who had a liking for me.

"(Signed) MARAT."

The inscription on the Palais Royal fountain—"Quantos effundit in usus!"—was hidden under two great canvases painted in distemper, the one representing Cahier de Gerville denouncing to the National Assembly the rallying cry of the "Chiffonistes" of Arles; the other, Louis XVI. brought back from Varennes in his royal carriage, and under the carriage a plank fastened by cords, on each end of which was seated a grenadier with fixed bayonet.

Very few of the larger shops were open; peripatetic haberdashery and toy shops

were dragged about by women, lighted by candles, which dropped their tallow on the merchandise. Open-air shops were kept by ex-nuns, in blonde wigs. This mender, darning stockings in a stall, was a countess; that dressmaker a marchioness. Madame de Boufflers inhabited a garret, from whence she could look out at her own hotel. Hawkers ran about offering the "papers of news." Persons who wore cravats that hid their chins were called "the scrofulous." Street-singers swarmed. The crowd hooted Pitou, the royalist song-writer, and a valiant man into the bargain; he was twenty-two times imprisoned and taken before the revolutionary tribunal for slapping his coat-tails as he pronounced the word *civism*. Seeing that his head was in danger, he exclaimed, "But it is just the opposite of my head that is in fault!"—a witticism which made the judges laugh, and saved his life. This Pitou ridiculed the rage for Greek and Latin names; his favorite song was about a cobbler, whom he called *Cujus*, and to whom he gave a wife named *Cujusdam*. They danced the Carmagnole in great circles. They no longer said gentleman and lady, but citizen and citizeness. They danced in the ruined cloisters with the church-lamps lighted on the altars, with cross-shaped chandeliers hanging from the vaulted roofs, and tombs beneath their feet. Blue "tyrant's waistcoats" were worn. There were liberty-cap shirt-pins made of white, blue, and red stones. The Rue de Richelieu was called the Street of Law; The Faubourg Saint Antoine was named the Faubourg of Glory; a statue of Nature stood in the Place de la Bastille. People pointed out to one another certain well-known personages—Chatelet, Didier, Nicholas and Garnier Delaunay, who stood guard at the door of Duplay

the joiner; Voulland, who never missed a guillotine-day, and followed the carts of the condemned—he called it going to “the red mass;” Montflabert, revolutionary juryman; and a marquis, who took the name of *Dix Août* (Tenth of August).

People watched the pupils of the *École Militaire* file past, qualified by the decrees of the Convention as “aspirants in the school of Mars,” and by the crowd as “the pages of Robespierre.” They read the proclamations of Fréron denouncing those suspected of the crime of “negotiantism.” Young scamps collected at the doors of the mayoralties to mock at the civil marriages, thronging about the brides and grooms as they passed, and shouting “Municipal marriages!” At the Invalides, the statues of the saints and kings were crowned with Phrygian caps. They played cards on the curb-stones at the crossings. The packs of cards were also in the full tide of revolution: the kings were replaced by genii; the queens by the goddess of Liberty; the knaves by figures representing Equality, and the aces by impersonations of Law. They tilled the public gardens; the plow worked at the Tuileries. With all these excesses was mingled, especially among the conquered parties, an indescribable haughty weariness of life. A man wrote to Fouquier-Tinville, “*Have the goodness to free me from existence. This is my address.*” Champanetz was arrested for having cried in the midst of the Palais Royal garden, “When are we to have the revolution of Turkey? I want to see the republic *à la Porte.*”

Newspapers appeared in legions. The hairdressers’ men curled the wigs of women in public, while the master read the *Moniteur* aloud. Others, surrounded by eager groups, commented with violent

gestures upon the journal *Listen to Us* of Dubois Crancé, or the *Trumpet* of Father Bellerose. Sometimes the barbers were pork-sellers as well, and hams and chitterlings might be seen hanging side by side with a golden-haired doll. Dealers sold in the open street the wines of the refugees: one merchant advertised wines of fifty-two sorts. Others displayed harp-shaped clocks and sofas “*à la duchesse.*” One hairdresser had for sign, “I shave the Clergy; I comb the Nobility; I arrange the Third Estate.”

People went to have their fortunes told by Martin, at No. 173 in the Rue d’Anjou, formerly Rue Dauphine. There was a lack of bread, of coals, of soap. Flocks of milch-cows might be seen coming in from the country. At the Vallée, lamb sold for fifteen francs the pound. An order of the Commune assigned a pound of meat per head every ten days.

People stood in rank at the doors of the butchers’ shops. One of these files had remained famous: it reached from a grocer’s shop in the Rue du Petit Canean to the middle of the Rue Montorgueil. To form a line was called “holding the cord,” from a long rope which was held in the hands of those standing in the row. Amid this wretchedness, the women were brave and mild: they passed entire nights awaiting their turn to get into the bakers’ shops.

The Revolution resorted to expedients which were successful; she alleviated this widespread distress by two perilous means—the assignat and the maximum. The assignat was the lever, the maximum was the fulcrum. This empiricism saved France.

The enemy, whether of Coblenz or London, gambled in assignats. Girls came and went, offering lavender-water, garters, false hair, and selling stocks.

There were jobbers on the steps of the Rue Vivienne, with muddy shoes, greasy hair, and fur caps decorated with fox-tails; and there were waifs from "the cess-pool of Agio in the Rue Valois," with varnished boots, toothpicks in their mouths, and smooth hats on their heads, to whom the girls said "thee and thou." Later, the people gave chase to them as they did to the thieves, whom the royalists styled "active citizens." For the time, theft was rare. There reigned a terrible destitution and a stoical probity. The barefooted and the starving passed with lowered eyelids before the jewelers' shops of the Palais Égalité. During a domiciliary visit that the Section Antoine made to the house of Beaumarchais, a woman picked a flower in the garden; the crowd boxed her ears. Wood cost four hundred francs in coin per cord; people could be seen in the streets sawing up their bedsteads. In the winter the fountains were frozen; two pails of water cost twenty sous: every man made himself a water-carrier. A gold louis was worth three thousand nine hundred and fifty francs. A course in a hackney-coach cost six hundred francs. After a day's use of a carriage, this sort of dialogue might be heard: "Coachman, how much do I owe you?" "Six thousand francs."

A greengrocer woman sold twenty thousand francs' worth of vegetables a day. A beggar said, "Help me, in the name of charity! I lack two hundred and thirty francs to finish paying for my shoes."

At the ends of the bridges might be seen colossal figures sculptured and painted by David, which Mercier insulted. "Enormous wooden Punches!" said he. The gigantic shapes symbolized Federalism and Coalition overturned.

There was no faltering among this people. There was the sombre joy of having

made an end of thrones. Volunteers abounded; each street furnished a battalion. The flags of the districts came and went, every one with its device. On the banner of the Capuchin district could be read, "Nobody can cut our beards." On another, "No other nobility than that of the heart." On all the walls were placards, large and small, white, yellow, green, red, printed and written, on which might be read this motto: "Long live the Republic!" The little children lisped "*Ça ira*."

These children were in themselves the great future.

Later, to the tragical city succeeded the cynical city. The streets of Paris have offered two revolutionary aspects entirely distinct—that before and that after the 9th Thermidor. The Paris of Saint-Just gave place to the Paris of Tallien. Such antitheses are perpetual; after Sinai, the Courtille appeared.

A season of public madness made its appearance. It had already been seen eighty years before. The people came out from under Louis XIV. as they did from under Robespierre, with a great need to breathe; hence the regency which opened that century and the directory which closed it. Two saturnalia after two terrorisms. France snatched the wicket-key and got beyond the Puritan cloister just as it did beyond that of monarchy, with the joy of a nation that escapes.

After the 9th Thermidor Paris was gay; but with an insane gayety. An unhealthy joy overflowed all bounds. To the frenzy for dying succeeded the frenzy for living, and grandeur eclipsed itself. They had a Trimalecion, calling himself Grimod de la Règnière: there was the "Almanac of the Gourmands." People dined in the entresols of the Palais Royal to the din of orchestras of women beating drums

and blowing trumpets; the "rigadooner" reigned, bow in hand. People supped Oriental fashion at Méot's, surrounded by perfumes. The artist Boze painted his daughters, innocent and charming heads of sixteen, *en guillotinéés*; that is to say, with bare necks and red shifts. To the wild dances in the ruined churches succeeded the balls of Ruggieri, of Luquet, Wenzel, Mauduit, and the Montansier; to grave citizenesses making lint succeeded sultanas, savages, nymphs; to the naked feet of the soldiers covered with blood, dust, and mud, succeeded barefooted women decorated with diamonds; at the same time, with shamelessness, improbity reappeared; and it had its purveyors in high ranks, and their imitators among the class below. A swarm of sharpers filled Paris, and every man was forced to guard well his "*luc*"—that is, his pocket-book. One of the amusements of the day was to go to the Palace of Justice to see the female thieves; it was necessary to tie fast their petticoats. At the doors of the theatres the street boys opened cab doors, saying, "Citizen and citizeness, there is room for two." The *Old Cordelier* and the *Friend of the People* were no longer published. In their place were cried *Punch's Letter* and the *Rogues' Petition*. The Marquis de Sade presided at the Section of the Pikes, Place Vendôme. The reaction was jovial and ferocious. The Dragons of Liberty of '92 were reborn under the name of the Chevaliers of the Dagger. At the same time there appeared in the booths that type, Jocrisse. There were "the Wonders," and in advance of these feminine marvels came "the Inconceivables." People swore by strange and outlandish oaths; they jumped back from Mirabeau to Bobèche. Thus it is that Paris sways back and forth; it is the enormous pendulum of civilization; it

touches either pole in turn, Thermopylæ and Gomorrah.

After '93 the Revolution traversed a singular occultation; the century seemed to forget to finish that which it had commenced; a strange orgy interposed itself, took the foreground, swept backward to the second awful Apocalypse; veiled the immeasurable vision, and laughed aloud after its fright. Tragedy disappeared in parody, and, rising darkly from the bottom of the horizon, a smoke of carnival effaced Medusa.

But in '93, where we are, the streets of Paris still wore the grandiose and savage aspect of the beginning. They had their orators, such as Varlet, who promenaded in a booth on wheels, from the top of which he harangued the passers-by; they had their heroes, of whom one was called the "Captain of the iron-pointed sticks;" their favorites, among whom ranked Gouffroy, the author of the pamphlet *Rougiſſe*. Certain of these popularities were mischievous, others had a healthy tone; one among them all, honest and fatal—it was that of Cimourdain.

CHAPTER II.

CIMOURDAIN.

CIMOURDAIN had a conscience pure but sombre. There was something of the absolute within him. He had been a priest, which is a grave matter. A man may, like the sky, possess a serenity which is dark and unfathomable; it only needs that something should have made night within his soul. The priesthood had made night in that of Cimourdain. He who

has been a priest remains one. What makes night within a man may leave stars. Cimourdain was full of virtues and verities, but they shone among shadows.

His history is easily written. He had been a village curate and tutor in a great family; then he inherited a small legacy and gained his freedom.

He was above all an obstinate man. He made use of meditation as one does of pincers; he did not think it right to quit an idea until he had followed it to the end; he thought stubbornly. He understood all the European languages, and something of others besides; this man studied incessantly, which aided him to bear the burden of celibacy; but nothing can be more dangerous than such a life of repression.

He had from pride, chance, or loftiness of soul been true to his vows, but he had not been able to guard his belief. Science had demolished faith; dogma had fainted within him.

Then, as he examined himself, he felt that his soul was mutilated; he could not nullify his priestly oath, but tried to remake himself man, though in an austere fashion. His family had been taken from him; he adopted his country. A wife had been refused him; he espoused humanity. Such vast plenitude has a void at bottom.

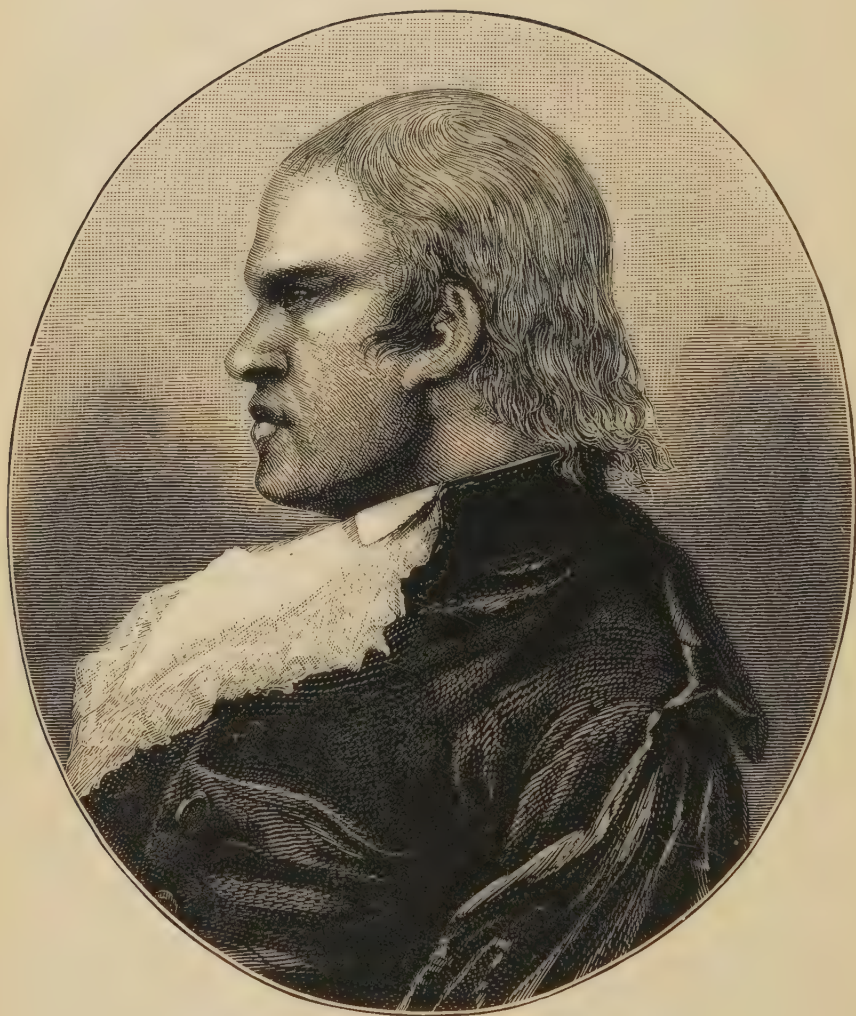
His peasant parents, in devoting him to the priesthood, had desired to elevate him above the common people; he voluntarily returned among them.

He went back with a passionate energy. He regarded the suffering with a terrible tenderness. From priest he had become philosopher, and from philosopher, athlete. While Louis XV. still lived, Cimourdain felt himself vaguely republican. But belonging to what republic? To

that of Plato perhaps, and perhaps also to the republic of Draco.

Forbidden to love, he set himself to hate. He hated lies, monarchy, theocracy, his garb of priest; he hated the present, and he called aloud to the future; he had a presentiment of it, he caught glimpses of it in advance; he pictured it awful and magnificent. In his view, to end the lamentable wretchedness of humanity required at once an avenger and a liberator. He worshipped the catastrophe afar off.

In 1789 this catastrophe arrived and found him ready. Cimourdain flung himself into this vast plan of human regeneration on logical grounds—that is to say, for a mind of his mould, inexorably; logic knows no softening. He lived among the great revolutionary years, and felt the shock of their mighty breaths: '89, the fall of the Bastille, the end of the torture of the people; on the 4th of August, '90, the end of feudalism; '91, Varennes, the end of royalty; '92, the birth of the Republic. He saw the Revolution loom into life; he was not a man to be afraid of that giant—far from it. This sudden growth in everything had revived him, and though already nearly old—he was fifty, and a priest ages faster than another man—he began himself to grow also. From year to year he saw events gain in grandeur, and he increased with them. He had at first feared that the Revolution would prove abortive; he watched it; it had reason and right on its side, he demanded success for it likewise; in proportion to the fear it caused the timid, his confidence strengthened. He desired that this Minerva, crowned with the stars of the future, should be Pallas also, with the Gorgon's head for buckler. He demanded that her divine voice should be



CIMOURDAIN.

able at need to fling back to the demons their infernal glare, and give them terror for terror.

Thus he reached '93.

'93 was the war of Europe against France, and of France against Paris. And what was the Revolution? It was the victory of France over Europe, and of Paris over France. Hence the immensity of that terrible moment—'93—grander than all the rest of the century. Nothing could be more tragic: Europe attacking France and France attacking Paris! A drama which reaches the stature of an epic. '93 is a year of intensity. The tempest is there in all its wrath and all its grandeur. Cimourdain felt himself at home. This distracted centre, terrible and splendid, suited the span of his wings. Like the sea-eagle amid the tempest, this man preserved his internal composure and enjoyed the danger. Certain winged natures, savage yet calm, are made to battle the winds—souls of the tempest: such exist.

He had put pity aside, reserving it only for the wretched. He devoted himself to those sorts of suffering which cause horror. Nothing was repugnant to him. That was his kind of goodness. He was divine in his readiness to succor what was loathsome. He searched for ulcers in order that he might kiss them. Noble actions with a revolting exterior are the most difficult to undertake; he preferred such. One day at the Hôtel Dieu a man was dying, suffocated by a tumor in the throat—a foetid, frightful abscess—contagious perhaps, which must be at once opened. Cimourdain was there; he put his lips to the tumor, sucked it, spitting it out as his mouth filled, and so emptied the abscess and saved the man. As he still wore his priest's dress at the time, some one said to him, "If you were to do

that for the king, you would be made a bishop." "I would not do it for the king," Cimourdain replied. The act and the response rendered him popular in the sombre quarters of Paris.

They gave him so great a popularity that he could do what he liked with those who suffered, wept, and threatened. At the period of the public wrath against monopolists—a wrath which was prolific in mistakes—Cimourdain by a word prevented the pillage of a boat loaded with soap at the quay Saint Nicholas, and dispersed the furious bands who were stopping the carriages at the barrier of Saint Lazare.

It was he who, two days after the 10th of August, headed the people to overthrow the statues of the kings. They slaughtered as they fell: in the Place Vendôme, a woman called Reine Violet was crushed by the statue of Louis XIV., about whose neck she had put a cord, which she was pulling. This statue of Louis XIV. had been standing a hundred years: it was erected the 12th of August, 1692; it was overthrown the 12th of August, 1792. In the Place de la Concorde, a certain Guinguerlot was butchered on the pedestal of Louis XV.'s statue for having called the demolishers scoundrels. The statue was broken in pieces. Later, it was melted to coin—into sous. The arm alone escaped—it was the right arm, which was extended with the gesture of a Roman emperor. At Cimourdain's request the people sent a deputation with this arm to Latude, the man who had been thirty-seven years buried in the Bastille. When Latude was rotting alive, the collar on his neck, the chain about his loins, in the bottom of that prison where he had been cast by the order of that king whose statue overlooked Paris, who could have prophesied to him that this prison

would fall — this statue would be destroyed? that he would emerge from the sepulchre and monarchy enter it? that he, the prisoner, would be the master of this hand of bronze which had signed his warrant; and that of this king of Mud there would remain only his brazen arm?

Cimourdain was one of those men who have an interior voice to which they listen. Such men seem absent-minded; no, they are attentive.

Cimourdain was at once learned and ignorant. He understood all science, and was ignorant of everything in regard to life. Hence his severity. He had his eyes bandaged, like the Themis of Homer. He had the blind certainty of the arrow, which, seeing not the goal, yet goes straight to it. In a revolution there is nothing so formidable as a straight line. Cimourdain went straight before him, fatal, unwavering.

He believed that in a social Genesis the farthest point is the solid ground, an error peculiar to minds which replace reason by logic. He went beyond the Convention; he went beyond the Commune; he belonged to the *Évêché*.

The society called the *Évêché*, because its meetings were held in a hall of the former episcopal palace, was rather a complication of men than a union. There assisted, as at the Commune, those silent but significant spectators who, as Garat said, "had as many pistols as pockets."

The *Évêché* was a strange mixture; a crowd at once cosmopolitan and Parisian. This is no contradiction, for Paris is the spot where beats the heart of the peoples. The great plebeian incandescence was at the *Évêché*. In comparison to it, the Convention was cold and the Commune lukewarm. The *Évêché* was one of those revolutionary formations similar to vol-

canic ones; it contained everything—ignorance, stupidity, probity, heroism, choler, the police. Brunswick had agents there. It numbered men worthy of Sparta and men who deserved the galleys. The greater part were mad and honest. The Gironde had pronounced by the mouth of Isnard, temporary president of the Convention, this monstrous warning:

"Take care, Parisians! There will not remain one stone upon another of your city, and the day will come when the place where Paris stood shall be searched for."

This speech created the *Évêché*. Certain men—and, as we have just said, they were men of all nations—felt the need of gathering themselves close about Paris. Cimourdain joined this club.

The society contained reactionists. It was born out of that public necessity for violence which is the formidable and mysterious side of revolutions. Strong with this strength, the *Évêché* at once began its work. In the commotions of Paris, it was the Commune that fired the cannon; it was the *Évêché* that sounded the tocsin.

In his implacable ingenuousness, Cimourdain believed that everything in the service of truth is justice, which rendered him fit to dominate the extremists on either side. Scoundrels felt that he was honest, and were satisfied. Crime is flattered by having virtue to preside over it. It is at once troublesome and pleasant. Palloy, the architect who had turned to account the demolition of the Bastille, selling its stones to his own profit, and who, appointed to whitewash the cell of Louis XVI., in his zeal covered the wall with bars, chains, and iron rings; Gouchon, the suspected orator of the Faubourg Saint Antoine, whose quit-tances were afterward found; Fournier,

the American, who on the 17th of July fired at Lafayette a pistol-shot, paid for, it was said, by Lafayette himself; Henriot, who had come out of Bicêtre, and who had been valet, mountebank, robber, and spy, before being a general and turning the guns on the Convention; La Regnie, formerly grand-vicar of Chartres, who had replaced his breviary by *The Père Duchesne*—all these men were held in respect by Cimourdain, and at certain moments, to keep the worst of them from stumbling, it was sufficient to feel his redoubtable and believing candor as a judgment before them. It was thus that Saint Just terrified Schneider. At the same time the majority of the *Évêché*, composed principally as it was of poor and violent men who were honest, believed in Cimourdain and followed him. He had for curate or aid-de-camp, as you please, that other republican priest, Danjou, whom the people loved on account of his height, and had christened Abbé Six-Foot. Cimourdain could have led where he would that intrepid chief called General La Pique, and that bold Truchon named the Great Nicholas, who had tried to save Madame de Lamballe, and had given her his arm, and made her spring over the corpses; an attempt which would have succeeded, had it not been for the ferocious pleasantry of the barber Charlot.

The Commune watched the Convention; the *Évêché* watched the Commune. Cimourdain, naturally upright and detesting intrigue, had broken more than one mysterious thread in the hand of Pache, whom Beurnonville called "the black man." Cimourdain at the *Évêché* was on confidential terms with all. He was consulted by Dotsent and Mormoro. He spoke Spanish with Guzman, Italian with Pio, English with Arthur, Flemish with Pereyra, German with the Austrian

Proby, the bastard of a prince. He created a harmony between these discordances. Hence his position was obscure and strong. Herbert feared him.

In these times and among these tragic groups, Cimourdain possessed the power of the inexorable. He was an impeccable, who believed himself infallible. No person had ever seen him weep. He was Virtue inaccessible and glacial. He was the terrible offspring of Justice.

There is no half-way possible to a priest in a revolution. A priest can only give himself up to this wild and prodigious chance either from the highest or the lowest motive; he must be infamous or he must be sublime. Cimourdain was sublime, but in isolation, in rugged inaccessibility, in inhospitable secretiveness; sublime amid a circle of precipices. Lofty mountains possess this sinister freshness.

Cimourdain had the appearance of an ordinary man; dressed in every-day garments, poor in aspect. When young, he had been tonsured; as an old man he was bald. What little hair he had left was gray. His forehead was broad, and to the acute observer it revealed his character. Cimourdain had an abrupt way of speaking, which was passionate and solemn; his voice was quick, his accent peremptory; his mouth bitter and sad; his eye clear and profound; and over his whole countenance an indescribable indignant expression.

Such was Cimourdain.

No one to-day knows his name. History has many of these great Unknown.

CHAPTER III.

A CORNER NOT DIPPED IN STYX.

WAS such a man indeed a man? Could the servant of the human race know fondness? Was he not too entirely a soul to possess a heart? This widespread embrace, which included everything and everybody, could it narrow itself down to one? Could Cimourdain love? We answer—Yes.

When young, and tutor in an almost princely family, he had had a pupil whom he loved—the son and heir of the house. It is so easy to love a child. What can one not pardon a child? One forgives him for being a lord, a prince, a king. The innocence of his age makes one forget the crime of race; the feebleness of the creature causes one to overlook the exaggeration of rank. He is so little that one forgives him for being great. The slave forgives him for being his master. The old negro idolizes the white nursling. Cimourdain had conceived a passion for his pupil. Childhood is so ineffable that one may unite all affections upon it. Cimourdain's whole power of loving prostrated itself, so to speak, before this boy; that sweet, innocent being became a sort of prey for that heart condemned to solitude. He loved with a mingling of all tendernesses: as father, as brother, as friend, as maker. The child was his son, not of his flesh, but of his mind. He was not the father, and this was not his work; but he was the master, and this his masterpiece. Of this little lord he had made a man. Who knows? Perhaps a great man. Such are dreams. Has one need of the permission of a family to create an intelligence, a will, an upright character? He had communicated to the young viscount, his scholar, all the advanced ideas which he held himself; he had inoculated

him with the redoubtable virus of his virtue; he had infused into his veins his own convictions, his own conscience and ideal; into this brain of an aristocrat he had poured the soul of the people.

The spirit suckles; the intelligence is a breast. There is an analogy between the nurse who gives her milk and the preceptor who gives his thought. Sometimes the tutor is more father than is the father, just as often the nurse is more mother than the mother.

This deep spiritual paternity bound Cimourdain to his pupil. The very sight of the child softened him.

Let us add this: to replace the father was easy; the boy no longer had one. He was an orphan; his father and mother were both dead. To keep watch over him he had only a blind grandmother and an absent great-uncle. The grandmother died; the great-uncle, head of the family, a soldier and a man of high rank, provided with appointments at court, avoided the old family dungeon, lived at Versailles, went forth with the army, and left the orphan alone in the solitary castle. So the preceptor was master in every sense of the word.

Let us add still further: Cimourdain had seen the child born. The boy, while very little, was seized with a severe illness. In this peril of death, Cimourdain watched day and night. It is the physician who prescribes, it is the nurse who saves, and Cimourdain saved the child. Not only did his pupil owe to him education, instruction, science, but he owed him also convalescence and health; not only did his pupil owe him the development of his mind, he owed him life itself. We worship those who owe us all; Cimourdain adored this child.

The natural separation came about at length. The education completed, Ci-

mourdain was obliged to quit the boy, grown to a young man. With what cold and unconscionable cruelty these separations are insisted upon! How tranquilly families dismiss the preceptor, who leaves his spirit in a child, and the nurse, who leaves her heart's blood!

Cimourdain, paid and put aside, went out of the grand world and returned to the sphere below. The partition between the great and the little closed again; the young lord, an officer of birth, and made captain at the outset, departed for some garrison; the humble tutor (already at the bottom of his heart an unsubmissive priest) hastened to go down again into that obscure ground-floor of the Church occupied by the under clergy, and Cimourdain lost sight of his pupil.

The Revolution came on; the recollection of that being whom he had made a man brooded within him, hidden but not extinguished by the immensity of public affairs.

It is a beautiful thing to model a statue and give it life; to mould an intelligence and instill truth therein is still more beautiful. Cimourdain was the Pygmalion of a soul.

The spirit may own a child.

This pupil, this boy, this orphan, was the sole being on earth whom he loved.

But even in such an affection would a man like this prove vulnerable?

We shall see.

BOOK THE SECOND.

THE PUBLIC-HOUSE OF THE RUE DU PAON.

CHAPTER I.

MINOS, ÆACUS, AND RHADAMANTHUS.

THERE was a public-house in the Rue du Paon which was called a café. This café had a back room, which is to-day historical. It was there that often, almost secretly, met certain men, so powerful and so constantly watched that they hesitated to speak with one another in public.

It was there that on the 23d of October, 1792, the Mountain and the Gironde exchanged their famous kiss. It was there that Garat, although he does not admit it in his Memoirs, came for information on that lugubrious night when, after having put Clavière in safety in the Rue du Beaune, he stopped his carriage on the Pont Royal to listen to the tocsin.

On the 28th of June, 1793, three men were seated about a table in this back chamber. Their chairs did not touch; they were placed one on either of the three sides of the table, leaving the fourth vacant. It was about eight o'clock in the evening; it was still light in the street, but dark in the back room, and a lamp hung from a hook in the ceiling—a luxury there—lighted the table.

The first of these three men was pale, young, grave, with thin lips and a cold glance. He had a nervous movement in his cheek, which must have made it difficult for him to smile. He wore his hair powdered; he was gloved; his light-blue coat, well brushed, was without a wrinkle, carefully buttoned. He wore nankeen

breeches, white stockings, a high cravat, a plaited shirt-frill, and shoes with silver buckles.

Of the other two men, one was a species of giant, the other a sort of dwarf. The tall one was untidily dressed in a coat of scarlet cloth, his neck bare, his unknotted cravat falling down over his shirt-frill, his vest gaping from lack of buttons. He wore top-boots; his hair stood stiffly up and was disarranged, though it still showed traces of powder; his very peruke was like a mane. His face was marked with small-pox; there was a power betokening a choleric temperament between his brows; a wrinkle that signified kindness at the corner of his mouth; his lips were thick, the teeth large; he had the fist of a porter and eyes that blazed. The little one was a yellow man, who looked deformed when seated. He carried his head thrown back, the eyes were injected with blood, there were livid blotches on his face; he had a handkerchief knotted about his greasy, straight hair; he had no forehead; the mouth was enormous and horrible. He wore pantaloons instead of knee-breeches, slippers, a waistcoat which seemed originally to have been of white satin, and over this a loose jacket, under whose folds a hard, straight line showed that a poniard was hidden. The first of these men was named Robespierre; the second, Danton; the third, Marat.

They were alone in the room. Before Danton was set a glass and a dusty wine-bottle, reminding one of Luther's half-pint of beer; before Marat a cup of coffee; before Robespierre only papers.

Near the papers stood one of those heavy, round, ridged, leaden inkstands, which will be remembered by men who were schoolboys at the beginning of this century. A pen was thrown carelessly

by the side of the inkstand. On the papers lay a great brass seal, on which could be read *Palloy fecit*, and which was a perfect miniature model of the Bastille.

A map of France was spread in the middle of the table. Outside the door was stationed Marat's "watch-dog," a certain Laurent Basse, ticket-porter, of No. 18 Rue des Cordeliers, who, some fifteen days after this 28th of June, say the 13th of July, was to deal a blow with a chair on the head of a woman named Charlotte Corday, at this moment vaguely dreaming in Caen. Laurent Basse was the proof-carrier of the *Friend of the People*. Brought this evening by his master to the café of the Rue du Paon, he had been ordered to keep the room closed when Marat, Danton, and Robespierre were seated, and to allow no person to enter unless it might be some member of the Committee of Public Safety, the Commune, or the *Évêché*.

Robespierre did not wish to shut the door against Saint-Just; Danton did not want it closed against Pache; Marat would not shut it against Guzman.

The conference had already lasted a long time. It was in reference to papers spread on the table, which Robespierre had read. The voices began to grow louder. Symptoms of anger arose between these three men. From without eager words could be caught at moments. At that period the example of the public tribunals seemed to have created the right to listen at doors. It was the time when the copying-clerk Fabricius Pâris looked through the keyhole at the proceedings of the Committee of Public Safety; a feat which, be it said by the way, was not without its use, for it was this Pâris who warned Danton on the night before the 31st of March, 1794. Laurent Basse had

his ear to the door of the back room where Danton, Marat, and Robespierre were. Laurent Basse served Marat, but he belonged to the *Évêché*.

CHAPTER II.

MAGNA TESTANTUR VOCE PER UMBRAS.

DANTON had just risen and pushed his chair hastily back. "Listen!" he cried. "There is only one thing imminent—the peril of the Republic. I only know one thing—to deliver France from the enemy. To accomplish that all means are fair. All! All! All! When I have to deal with a combination of dangers, I have recourse to every or any expedient; when I fear all, I have all. My thought is a lioness. No half-measures. No squeamishness in resolution. Nemesis is not a conceited prude. Let us be terrible and useful. Does the elephant stop to look where he sets his foot? We must crush the enemy."

Robespierre replied mildly: "I shall be very glad." And he added—"The question is to know where the enemy is."

"It is outside, and I have chased it there," said Danton.

"It is within, and I watch it," said Robespierre.

"And I will continue to pursue it," resumed Danton.

"One does not drive away an internal enemy."

"What, then, do you do?"

"Exterminate it."

"I agree to that," said Danton in his turn. Then he continued—"I tell you, Robespierre, it is without."

"Danton, I tell you it is within."

"Robespierre, it is on the frontier."

"Danton, it is in Vendée."

"Calm yourselves," said a third voice.

"It is everywhere, and you are lost." It was Marat who spoke.

Robespierre looked at him and answered tranquilly—"Truce to generalities. I particularize. Here are facts."

"Pedant!" grumbled Marat.

Robespierre laid his hand on the papers spread before him and continued: "I have just read you the dispatches from Prieur of the Marne. I have just communicated to you the information given by that *Gélambre*. Danton, listen! The foreign war is nothing; the civil war is all. The foreign war is a scratch that one gets on the elbow; civil war is the ulcer which eats up the liver. This is the result of what I have been reading: the Vendée, up to this day divided between several chiefs, is concentrating herself. Henceforth she will have one sole captain—"

"A central brigand," murmured Danton.

"Who is," pursued Robespierre, "the man that landed near Pontorsin on the 2d of June. You have seen who he was. Remember this landing coincides with the arrest of the acting representatives, Prieur of the Côte-d'Or and Romme of Bayeux, by the traitorous district of Calvados, the 2d of June—the same day."

"And their transfer to the castle of Caen," said Danton.

Robespierre resumed: "I continue my summing up of the dispatches. The war of the Woods is organizing on a vast scale. At the same time, an English invasion is preparing; Vendéans and English—it is Breton with Breton. The *Hurons* of Finistère speak the same language as the *Topinambes* of Cornwall. I have shown you an intercepted letter from *Puisage*, in which it is said that 'twenty

thousand red-coats distributed among the insurgents will be the means of raising a hundred thousand more.' When the peasant insurrection is prepared, the English descent will be made. Look at the plan—follow it on the map."

Robespierre put his finger on the chart and went on: "The English have the choice of landing-place from Cancale to Paimbol. Craig would prefer the Bay of Saint-Brieuc; Cornwallis, the Bay of Saint-Cast. That is mere detail. The left bank of the Loire is guarded by the rebel Vendean army, and as to the twenty-eight leagues of open country between Ancenis and Pontorsin, forty Norman parishes have promised their aid. The descent will be made at three points—Plérin, Iffiniac, and Pléneuf. From Plérin they can go to Saint-Brieuc, and from Pléneuf to Lamballe. The second day they will reach Dinan, where there are nine hundred English prisoners, and at the same time they will occupy Saint-Jouan and Saint-Méen; they will leave cavalry there. On the third day, two columns will march, the one from Jouan on Bedée, the other from Dinan on Becherel, which is a natural fortress, and where they will establish two batteries. The fourth day they will reach Rennes. Rennes is the key of Brittany. Whoever has Rennes has the whole. Rennes captured, Châteauneuf and Saint-Malo will fall. There are at Rennes a million of cartridges and fifty artillery field-pieces—"

"Which they will sweep off," murmured Danton.

Robespierre continued: "I conclude. From Rennes three columns will fall, the one on Fougères, the other on Vitré, the third on Redon. As the bridges are cut, the enemy will furnish themselves—you have seen this fact particularly stated—with pontoons and planks, and they will

have guides for the points fordable by the cavalry. From Fougères they will radiate to Avranches; from Redon to Ancenis; from Vitré to Laval. Nantes will capitulate. Brest will yield. Redon opens the whole extent of the Vilaine; Fougères gives them the route of Normandy; Vitré opens the route to Paris. In fifteen days they will have an army of brigands numbering three hundred thousand men, and all Brittany will belong to the King of France."

"That is to say, to the King of England," said Danton.

"No, to the King of France."

And Robespierre added—"The King of France is worse. It needs fifteen days to expel the stranger, and eighteen hundred years to eliminate monarchy."

Danton, who had reseated himself, leaned his elbows on the table, and rested his head in his hands in a thoughtful attitude.

"You see the peril," said Robespierre. "Vitré lays open to the English the road to Paris."

Danton raised his head and struck his two great clenched hands on the map as on an anvil.

"Robespierre, did not Verdun open the route to Paris to the Prussians?"

"Very well!"

"Very well, we will expel the English as we expelled the Prussians." And Danton rose again.

Robespierre laid his cold hand on the feverish fist of the other.

"Danton, Champagne was not for the Prussians, and Brittany is for the English. To retake Verdun was a foreign war; to retake Vitré will be civil war."

And Robespierre murmured in a chill, deep tone—"A serious difference." He added aloud—

"Sit down again, Danton, and look at

the map instead of knocking it with your fist."

But Danton was wholly given up to his own idea.

"That is madness!" cried he. "To look for the catastrophe in the west when it is in the east. Robespierre, I grant you that England is rising on the ocean; but Spain is rising among the Pyrenees; but Italy is rising among the Alps; but Germany is rising on the Rhine. And the great Russian bear is at the bottom. Robespierre, the danger is a circle, and we are within it. On the exterior, coalition; in the interior, treason. In the south, Lervaut half opens the door of France to the king of Spain. At the north, Dumouriez passes over to the enemy. For that matter, he always menaced Holland less than Paris. Nerwinde blots out Jemmapes and Valmy. The philosopher Rebaut Saint-Étienne, a traitor like the Protestant he is, corresponds with the courtier Montesquieu. The army is destroyed. There is not a battalion that has more than four hundred men remaining; the brave regiment of Deux-Ponts is reduced to a hundred and fifty men; the camp of Pamars has capitulated; there are only five hundred sacks of flour left at Givet; we are falling back on Landau; Wurmser presses Kleber; Mayence succumbs bravely; Condé like a coward. Valenciennes also. But all that does not prevent Chancel, who defends Valenciennes, and old Féraud, who defends Condé, being heroes, as well as Meunier, who defended Mayence. But all the rest are betraying us. Dharville betrayed us at Aix-la-Chapelle; Mouton at Brussels; Valence at Bréda; Neuilly at Limbourg; Miranda at Maestricht; Stengel, traitor; Lanvue, traitor; Ligonier, traitor; Menon, traitor; Dillon, traitor—hideous coin of Dumouriez. We must make examples. Custine's counter-

marches look suspicious to me: I suspect Custine of preferring the lucrative prize of Frankfort to the useful capture of Coblenz. Frankfort can pay for your millions of war tribute; so be it. What would that be in comparison with crushing that nest of refugees? Treason, I say. Meunier died on the 13th of June. Kleber is alone. In the meantime, Brunswick strengthens and advances. He plants the German flag on every French place that he takes. The Margrave of Brandenburg is to dog the arbiter of Europe; he pockets our provinces; he will adjudge Belgium to himself—you will see. One would say that we were working for Berlin. If this continue, and we do not put things in order, the French Revolution will have been made for the benefit of Potsdam; it will have accomplished for unique result the aggrandizement of the little state of Frederick II., and we shall have killed the King of France for the King of Prussia's sake."

And Danton burst into a terrible laugh. Danton's laugh made Marat smile.

"You have each one your hobby," said he. "Danton, yours is Prussia; Robespierre, yours is the Vendée. I am going to state facts in my turn. You do not perceive the real peril: it is this—the cafés and the gaming-houses. The Café Choiseul is Jacobin; the Café Pitou is Royalist; the Café Rendez-Vous attacks the National Guard; the Café of the Porte Saint-Martin defends it; the Café Régence is against Brissot; the Café Coratza is for him; the Café Procope swears by Diderot; the Café of the Théâtre Français swears by Voltaire; at the Rotunde they tear up the assignats; the Cafés Saint-Marceau are in a fury; the Café Manouri debates the question of flour; at the Café Foy uproars and fisticuffs; at the Perron

the hornets of the finance buzz. These are the matters which are serious."

Danton laughed no longer. Marat continued to smile.

The smile of a dwarf is worse than the laugh of a giant.

"Do you sneer at yourself, Marat?" growled Danton.

Marat gave that convulsive movement of his hip which was celebrated. His smile died.

"Ah, I recognize you, Citizen Danton! It is indeed you who in full Convention called me 'the individual Marat.' Listen; I forgive you. We are playing the fool! Ah! I mock at myself! See what I have done. I denounced Chazot; I denounced Pétion; I denounced Kersaint; I denounced Moreton; I denounced Dufriche Velazé; I denounced Ligonnier; I denounced Menou; I denounced Banneville; I denounced Gensonné; I denounced Biron; I denounced Lidon and Chambon. Was I mistaken? I smell treason in the traitor, and I find it best to denounce the criminal before he can commit his crime. I have the habit of saying in the evening that which you and others say on the following day. I am the man who proposed to the Assembly a perfect plan of criminal legislation. What have I done up to the present? I have asked for the instruction of the sections in order to discipline them for the Revolution; I have broken the seals of thirty-two boxes; I have reclaimed the diamonds deposited in the hands of Roland; I proved that the Brissotins gave to the Committee of the General Safety blank warrants; I noted the omissions in the report of Lindal upon the crimes of Capet; I voted the torture of the tyrant during the twenty-four hours; I defended the battalions of Manconseil and the Républicain; I prevented the reading of the letter of Narbonne and of Malonet; I

made a motion in favor of the wounded soldiers; I caused the suppression of the Commission of Six; I foresaw the treason of Dumouriez in the affair of Mons; I demanded the taking of a hundred thousand relatives of the refugees as hostages for the commissioners delivered to the enemy; I proposed to declare traitor any representative who should pass the barriers; I unmasked the Roland faction in the troubles at Marseilles; I insisted that a price should be set on the head of Égalité's son; I defended Bonchotte; I called for a nominal appeal in order to chase Isnard from the chair; I caused it to be declared that the Parisians had deserved well of the country. That is why I am called a dancing puppet by Louvet; that is why Finisterre demands my expulsion; why the city of London desires that I should be exiled, the city of Amiens that I should be muzzled; why Coburg wishes me to be arrested, and Leceintre Puiraveau proposes to the Convention to decree me mad. Ah there! Citizen Danton, why did you ask me to come to your conventicle if it were not to have my opinion? Did I ask to belong to it? Far from that. I have no taste for dialogues with counter-revolutionists like Robespierre and you. For that matter, I ought to have known that you would not understand me; you no more than Robespierre—Robespierre no more than you. So there is not a statesman here? You need to be taught to spell at politics; you must have the dot put over the i. What I said to you meant this: you both deceive yourselves. The danger is not in London, as Robespierre believes; nor in Berlin, as Danton believes: it is in Paris. It consists in the absence of unity; in the right of each one to pull on his own side, commencing with you two; in the blinding of minds; in the anarchy of wills—"

"Anarchy!" interrupted Danton. "Who causes that, if not you?"

Marat did not pause. "Robespierre, Danton, the danger is in this heap of cafés, in this mass of gaming-houses, this crowd of clubs—Clubs of the Blacks, the Fédéralists, the women—the Club of the Imperialists, which dates from Clermont-Tonnerre, and which was the Monarchical Club of 1790, a social circle conceived by the priest Claude Fauchet; Club of the Woolen Caps, founded by the gazetteer Prudhomme, et cætera; without counting your Club of the Jacobins, Robespierre, and your Club of the Cordeliers, Danton. The danger comes from the famine which caused the sack-porter Blin to hang up to the lamp of the Hôtel de Ville the baker of the Market Palu, François Denis, and in the justice which hung the sack-porter Blin for having hanged the baker Denis. The danger is in the paper money, which the people depreciate. In the Rue du Temple an assignat of a hundred francs fell to the ground, and a passer-by, a man of the people, said, '*It is not worth the pains of picking it up.*' The stock-brokers and the monopolists—there is the danger. To have nailed the black flag to the Hôtel de Ville—a fine advance! You arrest Baron Trenck; that is not sufficient. I want this old prison intriguer's neck wrung. You believe that you have got out of the difficulty because the President of the Convention puts a civic crown on the head of Labertiche, who received forty-one sabre cuts at Jemmapes, and of whom Chenier makes himself the elephant driver? Comedies and juggling! Ah, you will not look at Paris! You seek the danger at a distance when it is close at hand. What is the use of your police, Robespierre? For you have your spies—Pazan at the Commune—Coffinhal at the Revolutionary Tribunal—David at the

Committee of General Safety—Couthon at the Committee of Public Well-being. You see that I know all about it. Very well, learn this: the danger is over your heads; the danger is under your feet; conspiracies—conspiracies—conspiracies! The people in the streets read the newspapers to one another and exchange nods; six thousand men, without civic papers, returned emigrants, Muscadins and Mathevons, are hidden in cellars and garrets and the wooden galleries of the Palais Royal. People stand in a row at the bakers' shops; the women stand in the doorways and clasp their hands, crying, 'When shall we have peace?' You may shut yourselves up as close as you please in the hall of the Executive Council, in order to be alone; every word you speak is known, and as a proof, Robespierre, here are the words you spoke last night to Saint-Just—'Barbaroux begins to show a fat paunch; it will be a trouble to him in his flight.' Yes; the danger is everywhere, and above all in the centre. In Paris, the 'Retrogrades' plot, while patrols go barefooted; the aristocrats arrested on the 9th of March are already set at liberty; the fancy horses which ought to be harnessed to the frontier cannon spatter mud on us in the streets; a loaf of bread weighing four pounds costs three francs twelve sous; the theatres play indecent pieces, and Robespierre will presently have Danton guillotined."

"Oh, there, there!" said Danton.

Robespierre attentively studied the map.

"What is needed," cried Marat, abruptly, "is a dictator. Robespierre, you know that I want a dictator."

Robespierre raised his head. "I know, Marat; you or me."

"Me or you," said Marat.

Danton grumbled between his teeth—"The dictatorship; only try it!"

Marat caught Danton's frown. "Hold!" he began again: "One last effort. Let us get some agreement. The situation is worth the trouble. Did we not come to an agreement for the day of the 31st of May? The entire question is a more serious one than that of Girondism, which was a question of detail. There is truth in what you say; but *the* truth, the whole truth, the real truth, is what I say. In the south, Federalism; in the west, Royalism; in Paris, the duel of the Convention and the Commune; on the frontiers, the retreat of Custine and the treason of Dumouriez. What does all this signify? Dismemberment. What is necessary to us? Unity. There is safety; but we must hasten to reach it. Paris must assume the government of the Revolution. If we lose an hour, to-morrow the Vendéans may be at Orleans, and the Prussians in Paris. I grant you this, Danton; I accord you that, Robespierre. So be it. Well, the conclusion is—a dictatorship. Let us seize the dictatorship—we three who represent the Revolution. We are the three heads of Cerberus. Of these three heads, one talks—that is you, Robespierre; one roars—that is you, Danton."

"The other bites," said Danton; "that is you, Marat."

"All three bite," said Robespierre.

There was a silence. Then the dialogue, full of dark threats, recommenced.

"Listen, Marat; before entering into a marriage, people must know each other. How did you learn what I said yesterday to Saint-Just?"

"That is my affair, Robespierre."

"Marat!"

"It is my duty to enlighten myself, and my business to inform myself."

"Marat!"

"I like to know things."

"Marat!"

"Robespierre, I know what you say to Saint-Just, as I know what Danton says to Lacroix; as I know what passes on the Quay of the Theatins, at the Hôtel Labriffe, the den where the nymphs of the emigration meet; as I know what happens in the house of the Thilles, near Gonesse, which belongs to Valmerange, former administrator of the ports—where, since, Maurzand Cazalis went; where, since then, Siéyès and Vergniaud went, and where now some—another goes once a week." In saying "another," Marat looked significantly at Danton.

Danton cried, "If I had two farthings' worth of power, this would be terrible."

Marat continued: "I know what I am saying to you, Robespierre, just as I knew what was going on in the Temple tower when they fattened Louis XVI. there, so well that the he-wolf, the she-wolf, and the cubs ate up eighty-six baskets of peaches in the month of September alone. During that time the people were starving. I know that, as I know that Roland was hidden in a lodging looking on a back court, in the Rue de la Harpe; as I know that 600 of the pikes of July 14th were manufactured by Faure, the Duke of Orleans' locksmith; as I know what they do in the house of the Saint-Hilaire, the mistress of Sillery; on the days when there is to be a ball, it is old Sillery himself who chinks the floor of the yellow saloon of the Rue Neuve des Mathurins; Buzot and Kersaint dined there. Saladin dined there on the 27th, and with whom, Robespierre? With your friend Lasource."

"Mere words," muttered Robespierre. "Lasource is not my friend."

And he added, thoughtfully. "In the meanwhile there are in London eighteen manufactories of false assignats."

Marat went on in a voice still tranquil, though it had a slight tremulousness that was threatening: "You are the faction of the All-Importants! Yes; I know everything, in spite of what Saint-Just calls 'the silence of State—'"

Marat emphasized these last words, looked at Robespierre, and continued:

"I know what is said at your table the days when Lebas invites David to come and eat the dinner cooked by his betrothed, Elizabeth Duplaz—your future sister-in-law, Robespierre. I am the far-seeing eye of the people, and, from the bottom of my cave I watch. Yes, I see; yes, I hear; yes, I know! Little things content you. You admire yourselves. Robespierre poses to be contemplated by his Madame de Chalabre, the daughter of that Marquis de Chalabre who played whist with Louis XV. the evening Damiens was executed. Yes, yes; heads are carried high. Saint-Just lives in a cravat. Legendre's dress is scrupulously correct; new frock-coat and white waistcoat, and a shirt-frill to make people forget his apron. Robespierre imagines that history will be interested to know that he wore an olive-colored frock-coat *à la Constituante*, and a sky-blue dress-coat *à la Convention*. He had his portrait hanging on all the walls of his chamber—"

Robespierre interrupted him in a voice even more composed than Marat's own: "And you, Marat, have yours in all the sewers."

They continued this style of conversation, in which the slowness of their voices emphasized the violence of the attacks and retorts, and added a certain irony to menace.

"Robespierre, you have called those who desire the overthrow of thrones 'the Don Quixotes of the human race.'"

"And you, Marat, after the 4th of Au-

gust, in No. 559 of the *Friend of the People* (ah, I have remembered the number; it may be useful!), you demanded that the titles of the nobility should be restored to them. You said, 'A duke is always a duke.'"

"Robespierre, in the sitting of December 7th, you defended the woman Roland against Viard."

"Just as my brother defended you, Marat, when you were attacked at the Jacobin Club. What does that prove? Nothing!"

"Robespierre, we know the cabinet of the Tuileries where you said to Garat, 'I am tired of the Revolution!'"

"Marat, it was here, in this public-house, that, on the 29th of October, you embraced Barbaroux."

"Robespierre, you said to Buzot, 'The Republic! what is that?'"

"Marat, it was also in this public-house that you invited three Marseilles suspects to keep you company."

"Robespierre, you have yourself escorted by a stout fellow from the market, armed with a club."

"And you, Marat—on the eve of the 10th of August, you asked Buzot to help you flee to Marseilles disguised as a jockey."

"During the prosecutions of September you hid yourself, Robespierre."

"And you, Marat—you showed yourself."

"Robespierre, you flung the red cap on the ground."

"Yes, when a traitor hoisted it. That which decorates Dumouriez sullies Robespierre."

"Robespierre, you refused to cover Louis XVI.'s head with a veil while Chateaufieux's soldiers were passing."

"I did better than veil his head: I cut it off."

Danton interposed, but it was like oil flung upon flames.

"Robespierre, Marat," said he; "calm yourselves."

Marat did not like being named the second. He turned about. "With what does Danton meddle?" he asked.

Danton bounded.

"With what do I meddle? With this! That we must not have fratricide; that there must be no strife between two men who serve the people; that it is enough to have a foreign war; that it is enough to have a civil war; that it would be too much to have a domestic war; that it is I who have made the Revolution, and I will not permit it to be spoiled. Now you know what it is I meddle with!"

Marat replied, without raising his voice, "You had better be getting your accounts ready."

"My accounts!" cried Danton. "Go ask for them in the defiles of Argonne—in Champagne delivered—in Belgium conquered—of the armies where I have already four times offered my breast to the musket-shots. Go demand them at the Place de la Revolution, at the scaffold of January 21st, of the throne flung to the ground, of the guillotine; that widow—"

Marat interrupted him: "The guillotine is a virgin Amazon: she exterminates; she does not give birth."

"Are you sure?" retorted Danton. "I tell you I will make her fruitful."

"We shall see," said Marat. He smiled.

Danton saw this smile.

"Marat," cried he, "you are the man that hides; I am the man of the open air and broad day. I hate the life of a reptile. It would not suit me to be a wood-louse. You inhabit a cave; I live in the street. You hold communication with none; who-

soever passes may see and speak with me."

"Pretty fellow! will you mount up to where I live?" snarled Marat.

Then his smile disappeared, and he continued, in a peremptory tone, "Danton, give an account of the thirty-three thousand crowns, ready money, that Montmorin paid you in the king's name under pretext of indemnifying you for your post of solicitor at the Châtelet."

"I made one on the 14th day of July," said Danton, haughtily

"And the Gardez-Meublé? and the crown diamonds?"

"I was of the 6th of October."

"And the thefts of your *alter ego*, Lacroix, in Belgium?"

"I was of the 20th of June."

"And the loans to the Montansier?"

"I urged the people on to the return from Varennes."

"And the opera-house, built with money that you furnished?"

"I armed the sections of Paris."

"And the hundred thousand livres, secret funds of the Ministry of Justice?"

"I caused the 10th of August."

"And the two millions for the Assembly's secret expenses, of which you took the fourth?"

"I stopped the enemy on their march, and I barred the passage to the kings in coalition."

"Prostitute!" said Marat.

Danton was terrible as he rose to his full height.

"Yes!" cried he. "I am! I sold myself, but I saved the world!"

Robespierre had gone back to biting his nails. As for him, he could neither laugh nor smile. The laugh—the lightning—of Danton, and the smile—the sting—of Marat were both wanting to him.

Danton resumed: "I am like the ocean

—I have my ebb and flow ; at low water my shoals may be seen ; at high tide you may see my waves.”

“You foam,” said Marat.

“My tempest,” said Danton.

Marat had risen at the same moment as Danton. He also exploded. The snake became suddenly a dragon.

“Ah !” cried he. “Ah, Robespierre ! Ah, Danton ! You will not listen to me ! Well, you are lost ; I tell you so. Your policy ends in an impossibility to go farther ; you have no longer an outlet ; and you do things which shut every door against you—except that of the tomb.”

“That is our grandeur,” said Danton.

He shrugged his shoulders.

Marat hurried on : “Danton, beware. Verginaud has also a wide mouth, thick lips, and frowning eyebrows ; Verginaud is pitted, too, like Mirabeau and like thee ; that did not prevent the 31st of May. Ah, you shrug your shoulders ! Sometimes a shrug of the shoulders makes the head fall. Danton, I tell thee, that big voice, that loose cravat, those top-boots, those little suppers, those great pockets—all those are things which concern Louisette.”

Louissette was Marat’s pet name for the guillotine.

He pursued : “And as for thee, Robespierre, thou art a Moderate, but that will serve nothing. Go on—powder thyself, dress thy hair, brush thy clothes, play the vulgar coxcomb, have clean linen, keep curled and frizzed and bedizzened ; none the less thou wilt go to the Place de la Grève ! Read Brunswick’s proclamation ! Thou wilt get a treatment no less than that of the regicide Damiens ! Fine as thou art, thou wilt be dragged at the tails of four horses.”

“Echo of Coblenz !” said Robespierre between his teeth.

“I am the echo of nothing—I am the cry of the whole, Robespierre !

“Ah, you are young, you ! How old art thou, Danton ? Four-and-thirty.—How many are your years, Robespierre ? Thirty-three. Well, I—I have lived always ! I am the old human suffering—I have lived six thousand years.”

“That is true,” retorted Danton. “For six thousand years Cain has been preserved in hatred, like the toad in a rock ; the rock breaks, Cain springs out among men, and is called Marat.”

“Danton !” cried Marat, and a livid glare illuminated his eyes.

“Well, what ?” asked Danton.

Thus these three terrible men conversed.

They were conflicting thunderbolts.

CHAPTER III.

A STIRRING OF THE INMOST NERVES.

THERE was a pause in the dialogue ; these Titans withdrew for a moment each into his own reflections.

Lions dread hydras. Robespierre had grown very pale, and Danton very red. A shiver ran through the frames of both.

The wild-beast glare in Marat’s eyes had died out ; a calm, cold and imperious, settled again on the face of this man, dreaded by his formidable associates.

Danton felt himself conquered, but he would not yield. He resumed :

“Marat talks very loud about the dictatorship and unity, but he has only one ability—that of breaking to pieces.”

Robespierre parted his thin lips, and

said: "As for me, I am of the opinion of Anacharsis Cloots, I say—Neither Roland nor Marat."

"And I," replied Marat, "I say—Neither Danton nor Robespierre."

He regarded both fixedly, and added: "Let me give you advice, Danton. You are in love, you think of marrying again; do not meddle any more with politics—be wise."

And moving backward a step toward the door as if to go out, he made them a menacing salute, and said, "Adieu, gentlemen."

Danton and Robespierre shuddered. At this instant a voice rose from the bottom of the room, saying, "You are wrong, Marat."

All three turned about. During Marat's explosion, some one had entered unperceived by the door at the end of the room.

"It is you, Citizen Cimourdain?" asked Marat. "Good-day."

It was indeed Cimourdain.

"I say you are wrong, Marat," he repeated.

Marat turned green, which was his way of growing pale.

"You are useful, but Robespierre and Danton are necessary. Why threaten them? Union, union, citizens! The people expect unity."

This entrance acted like a dash of cold water, and had the effect that the arrival of a stranger does on a family quarrel—it calmed the surface, if not the depths.

Cimourdain advanced toward the table. Danton and Robespierre knew him. They had often remarked among the public tribunals of the Convention this obscure but powerful man, whom the people saluted. Nevertheless, Robespierre, always a stickler for forms, asked—

"Citizen, how did you enter?"

"He belongs to the *Évêché*," replied Marat, in a voice in which a certain submission was perceptible. Marat braved the Convention, led the Commune, and feared the *Évêché*. This is a law.

Mirabeau felt Robespierre stirring at some unknown depth below; Robespierre felt Marat stir; Marat felt Hebert stir; Hebert, Babeuf. As long as the underneath layers are still, the politician can advance; but under the most revolutionary there must be some subsoil, and the boldest stop in dismay when they feel under their feet the earthquake they have created.

To be able to distinguish the movement which covetousness causes from that brought about by principle—to combat the one and second the other—is the genius and the virtue of great revolutionists.

Danton saw that Marat faltered. "Oh, Citizen Cimourdain is not one too many," said he. And he held out his hand to the new-comer.

Then he said: "Zounds, explain the situation to Citizen Cimourdain. He appears just at the right moment. I represent the Mountain; Robespierre represents the Committee of Public Safety; Marat represents the Commune; Cimourdain represents the *Évêché*. He is come to give the casting vote."

"So be it," said Cimourdain, simply and gravely. "What is the matter in question?"

"The Vendée," replied Robespierre.

"The Vendée!" repeated Cimourdain.

Then he continued: "There is the great danger. If the Revolution perish, she will perish by the Vendée. One Vendée is more formidable than ten Germanies. In order that France may live, it is necessary to kill the Vendée."



These few words won him Robespierre. Still he asked this question, "Were you not formerly a priest?"

Cimourdain's priestly air did not escape Robespierre. He recognized in another that which he had within himself.

Cimourdain replied, "Yes, citizen."

"What difference does that make?" cried Danton. "When priests are good fellows, they are worth more than others. In revolutionary times, the priests melt into citizens, as the bells do into arms and cannon. Danjou is a priest; Daunou is a priest; Thomas Lindet is the Bishop of Evreux. Robespierre, you sit in the Convention side by side with Massieu, Bishop of Beauvais. The Grand Vicar Vaugeois was a member of the Insurrection Committee of August 10. Chabot is a Capuchin. It was Dom Gerle who devised the tennis-court oath; it was the Abbé Audran who caused the National Assembly to be declared superior to the king; it was the Abbé Goutte who demanded of the Legislature that the dais should be taken away from Louis XVI.'s arm-chair; it was the Abbé Grégoire who instigated the abolition of royalty."

"Seconded," sneered Marat, "by the actor Collot d'Herbois. Between them they did the work; the priest overturned the throne, the comedian flung down the king."

"Let us get back to the Vendée," said Robespierre.

"Well, what is it?" demanded Cimourdain. "What is this Vendée doing now?"

Robespierre answered—"This: she has found a chief. She becomes terrible."

"Who is this chief, Citizen Robespierre?"

"A *ci-devant* Marquis de Lantenac, who styles himself a Breton prince."

Cimourdain made a movement.

"I know him," said he; "I was chaplain in his house."

He reflected for a moment, then added: "He was a man of gallantry before being a soldier."

"Like Biron, who was a Lauzun," said Danton.

And Cimourdain continued, thoughtfully: "Yes; an old man of pleasure. He must be terrible."

"Frightful," said Robespierre. "He burns the villages, kills the wounded, massacres the prisoners, shoots the women."

"The women!"

"Yes. Among others he had the mother of three children shot. Nobody knows what became of the little ones. He is really a captain: he understands war."

"Yes, in truth," replied Cimourdain. "He was in the Hanoverian war, and the soldiers said, Richelieu in appearance, Lantenac at the bottom. Lantenac was the real general. Talk about him to your colleague, Dussaulx."

Robespierre remained silent for a moment; then the dialogue began anew between him and Cimourdain.

"Well, Citizen Cimourdain, this man is in Vendée."

"Since when?"

"The last three weeks."

"He must be declared an outlaw."

"That is done."

"A price must be set on his head."

"It is done."

"A large reward must be offered to whoever will take him."

"That is done."

"Not in assignats."

"That is done."

"In gold."

"That is done."

"And he must be guillotined."

"That *will* be done."

"By whom?"

"By you."

"By me?"

"Yes; you will be delegated by the Committee of Public Safety with unlimited powers."

"I accept," said Cimourdain.

Robespierre made his choice of men rapidly—the quality of a true statesman. He took from the portfolio before him a sheet of white paper, on which could be read this printed heading: "The French Republic One and Indivisible. Committee of Public Safety."

Cimourdain continued: "Yes, I accept. The terrible against the terrible. Lantenac is ferocious; I shall be so too. War to the death against this man. I will deliver the Republic from him, please God."

He checked himself; then resumed: "I am a priest; no matter; I believe in God."

"God has gone out of date," said Danton.

"I believe in God," said Cimourdain, unmoved.

Robespierre gave a sinister nod of approval.

Cimourdain asked: "To whom am I delegated?"

"The commandant of the exploring division sent against Lantenac. Only—I warn you—he is a nobleman."

Danton cried out: "That is another thing which matters little. A noble! Well, what then? It is with the nobles as with the priests. When one of either class is good, he is excellent. Nobility is a prejudice; but we should not have it in one sense more than the other; no more against than in favor of it. Robespierre, is not Saint-Just a noble? Florelle de Saint-Just, zounds! Anacharsis Cloots is

a baron. Our friend Charles Hesse, who never misses a meeting of the Cordeliers, is a prince, and the brother of the reigning Landgrave of Hesse-Rothenburg. Montaut, the intimate of Marat, is the Marquis de Montaut. There is in the Revolutionary Tribunal a juror who is a priest—Vilate; and a juror who is a nobleman—Leroy, Marquis de Montflabert. Both are tried men."

"And you forget," added Robespierre, "the foreman of the revolutionary jury."

"Antonelle?"

"Who is the Marquis Antonelle," said Robespierre.

Danton replied: "Dampierre was a nobleman, the one who lately got himself killed before Condé for the Republic; and Beaurepaire was a noble, he who blew his brains out, rather than open the gates of Verdun to the Prussians."

"All of which," grumbled Marat, "does not alter the fact that on the day Condorcet said, 'The Gracchi were nobles,' Danton cried out, 'All nobles are traitors, beginning with Mirabeau and ending with thee.'"

Cimourdain's grave voice made itself heard: "Citizen Danton, Citizen Robespierre, you are perhaps right to have confidence, but the people distrusts them, and the people is not wrong in so doing. When a priest is charged with the surveillance of a nobleman, the responsibility is doubled, and it is necessary for the priest to be inflexible."

"True," said Robespierre.

Cimourdain added, "And inexorable."

Robespierre replied, "It is well said, Citizen Cimourdain. You will have to deal with a young man. You will have the ascendancy over him, being double his age. It will be necessary to direct him, but he must be carefully managed. It appears that he possesses military talent

—all the reports are unanimous as to that. He belongs to a corps which has been detached from the Army of the Rhine to go into Vendée. He arrives from the frontier, where he was noticeable for intelligence and courage. He leads the exploring column in a superior way. For fifteen days he has held the old Marquis de Lantenac in check. He restrains and drives him before him. He will end by forcing him to the sea, and tumbling him into it headlong. Lantenac has the cunning of an old general, and the audacity of a youthful captain. This young man has already enemies, and those who are envious of him. The Adjutant-General Léchelle is jealous of him.”

“That L’Échelle* wants to be commander-in-chief,” interrupted Danton; “there is nothing in his favor but a pun—‘it needs a ladder to mount into a cart.’ All the same. Charette† beats him.”

“And he is not willing,” pursued Robespierre, “that anybody besides himself should beat Lantenac. The misfortune of the Vendean war is in such rivalries. Heroes badly commanded—that is what our soldiers are. A simple captain of hus-sars, Chérin, enters Saumur with trumpets playing *Ça ira*; he takes Saumur; he could keep on and take Cholet, but he has no orders, so he halts. All those commands of the Vendée must be remodeled. The Body Guards are scattered, the forces dispersed; a scattered army is an army paralyzed; it is a rock crumbled into dust. At the camp of Paramé there are no longer any tents. There are a hundred useless little companies posted between Tréguier and Dinan, of which a division might be formed that could guard the whole coast. Léchelle, supported by Pallain, strips the northern coast under

pretext of protecting the southern, and so opens France to the English. A half-million peasants in revolt and a descent of England upon France—that is Lantenac’s plan. The young commander of the exploring column presses his sword against Lantenac’s loins, keeps it there, and beats him without Léchelle’s permission; now Léchelle is his general, so Léchelle denounces him. Opinions are divided in regard to this young man. Léchelle wants to have him shot. The Prieur of the Marne wants to make him adjutant-general.”

“This youth appears to me to possess great qualities,” said Cimourdain.

“But he has one fault!” The interruption came from Marat.

“What is it?” demanded Cimourdain.

“Clemency,” said Marat.

Then he added: “He is firm in battle, and weak afterward. He shows indulgence; he pardons; he grants mercy; he protects devotees and nuns; he saves the wives and daughters of aristocrats; he releases prisoners; he sets priests free.”

“A grave fault,” murmured Cimourdain.

“A crime,” said Marat.

“Sometimes,” said Danton.

“Often,” said Robespierre.

“Almost always,” chimed in Marat.

“When one has to deal with the enemies of the country—always,” said Cimourdain.

Marat turned toward him.

“And what, then, would you do with a Republican chief who set a Royalist chief at liberty?”

“I should be of Léchelle’s opinion; I would have him shot.”

“Or guillotined,” said Marat.

“He might have his choice,” said Cimourdain.

* A ladder.

† Charette—a cart.

Danton began to laugh. "I like one as well as the other."

"Thou art sure to have one or the other," growled Marat.

His glance left Danton and settled again on Cimourdain.

"So, Citizen Cimourdain, if a Republican leader were to flinch, you would cut off his head?"

"Within twenty-four hours."

"Well," retorted Marat, "I am of Robespierre's opinion; Citizen Cimourdain ought to be sent as delegate of the Committee of Public Safety to the commandant of the exploring division of the coast army. How is it you call this commandant?"

Robespierre answered, "He is a *ci-devant* noble."

He began to turn over the papers.

"Get the priest to guard the nobleman," said Danton. "I distrust a priest when he is alone; I distrust a noble when he is alone. When they are together, I do not fear them. One watches the other, and they do well."

The indignant look always on Cimourdain's face grew deeper, but without doubt finding the remark just at bottom, he did not look at Danton, but said in his stern voice,

"If the Republican commander who is confided to me makes one false step, the penalty will be death."

Robespierre, with his eyes on the portfolio, said, "Here is the name, Citizen Cimourdain. The commandant, in regard to whom full powers will be granted you, is a so-called viscount; his name is Gauvain."

Cimourdain turned pale. "Gauvain!" he cried.

Marat saw his sudden pallor.

"The Viscount Gauvain!" repeated Cimourdain.

"Yes," said Robespierre.

"Well?" said Marat, with his eyes fixed on the priest.

There was a brief silence, which Marat broke.

"Citizen Cimourdain, on the conditions named by yourself, do you accept the mission as commissioner delegate near the Commandant Gauvain? Is it decided?"

"It is decided," replied Cimourdain. He grew paler and paler.

Robespierre took the pen which lay near him, wrote in his slow, even hand four lines on the sheet of paper which bore the heading COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY, signed them, and passed the sheet and the pen to Danton; Danton signed, and Marat, whose eyes had not left Cimourdain's livid face, signed after Danton.

Robespierre took the paper again, dated it, and gave it to Cimourdain, who read:

"YEAR I. OF THE REPUBLIC.

"Full powers are granted to Citizen Cimourdain, delegated Commissioner of Public Safety near the Citizen Gauvain, commanding the Exploring Division of the Army of the Coasts.

"ROBESPIERRE.

"DANTON.

"MARAT."

And beneath the signatures, "June 28th, 1793."

The revolutionary calendar, called the Civil Calendar, had no legal existence at this time, and was not adopted by the Convention, on the proposition of Romme, until October 5th, 1793.

While Cimourdain read, Marat watched him.

He said in a half-voice, as if talking to himself, "It will be necessary to have all this formalized by a decree of the Convention, or a special warrant of the Com-

mittee of Public Safety. There remains something yet to be done."

"Citizen Cimourdain, where do you live?" asked Robespierre.

"Court of Commerce."

"Hold! so do I, too," said Danton.

"You are my neighbor."

Robespierre resumed: "There is not a moment to lose. To-morrow you will receive your commission in form, signed by all the members of the Committee of Public Safety. This is a confirmation of the commission. It will accredit you in a special manner to the acting representatives, Philippeaux, Prieur of the Marne, Lecointre, Alquier, and the others. We know you. Your powers are unlimited. You can make Gauvain a general or send him to the scaffold. You will receive your commission to-morrow at three o'clock. When shall you set out?"

"At four," said Cimourdain.

And they separated.

As he entered his house, Marat informed Simonne Evrard that he should go to the Convention on the morrow.

BOOK THE THIRD.

THE CONVENTION.

CHAPTER I.

WE approach the grand summit. Behold the Convention!

The gaze grows steady in presence of this height. Never has a more lofty spectacle appeared on the horizon of mankind.

There is one Himalaya, and there is one Convention.

The Convention is perhaps the culminating point of History.

During its lifetime—for it lived—men did not quite understand what it was. It was precisely the grandeur which escaped its contemporaries; they were too much scared to be dazzled. Everything grand possesses a sacred horror. It is easy to admire mediocrities and hills, but whatever is too lofty, whether it be a genius or a mountain—an assembly as well as a masterpiece—alarms when seen too near. An immense height appears an exaggeration. It is fatiguing to climb. One loses breath upon acclivities, one slips down declivities, one is hurt by sharp, rugged heights which are in themselves beautiful; torrents in their foaming reveal the precipices; clouds hide the mountain tops; a sudden ascent terrifies as much as a fall. Hence there is a greater sensation of fright than admiration. What one feels is fantastic enough—an aversion to the grand. One sees the abyss and loses sight of the sublimity; one sees the monster and does not perceive the marvel. Thus the Convention was at first judged. It was measured by the purblind—it, which needed to be looked at by eagles.

To-day we see it in perspective, and it throws across the deep and distant heavens, against a background at once serene and tragic—the immense profile of the French Revolution.

CHAPTER II.

THE 14th of July delivered.

The 10th of August thundered.

The 21st of September founded.

The 21st of September was the Equinox—was Equilibrium.

Libra—the balance. It was, according to the remark of Rousseau, that under this sign of Equality and Justice the Republic was proclaimed. A constellation heralded it.

The Convention is the first avatar of the peoples. It was by the Convention that the grand new page opened and the future of to-day commenced.

Every idea must have a visible enfolding; a habitation is necessary to any principle; a church is God between four walls; every dogma must have a temple. When the Convention became a fact, the first problem to be solved was how to lodge the Convention.

At first the Manège, then the Tuileries, was taken. A platform was raised, scenery arranged—a great gray painting by David imitating bass-reliefs; benches were placed in order; there was a square tribune, parallel pilasters with plinths like blocks and long rectilinear stems; square inclosures, into which the spectators crowded, and which were called the public tribunes; a Roman velarium, Grecian draperies; and in these right angles and these straight lines the Convention was installed—the tempest confined within this geometrical plan. On the tribune, the Red Cap was painted in gray. The Royalists began by laughing at this gray red cap, this theatrical hall, this monument of pasteboard, this sanctuary of papier-maché, this Pantheon of mud and spittle.

How quickly it would disappear! The columns were made of the staves from hogsheads, the arches were of deal boards, the bass-reliefs of mastic, the entablatures were of pine, the statues of plaster; the marbles were paint, the walls canvas;

and of this provisional shelter France has made an eternal dwelling.

When the Convention began to hold its sessions in the Riding-school, the walls were covered with the placards which filled Paris at the period of the return from Varennes.

On one might be read: *The king returns. Any person who cheers him shall be beaten; any person who insults him shall be hanged.*

On another: *Peace! Hats on heads. He is about to pass before his judges.*

On another: *The king has leveled at the nation. He has hung fire; it is now the nation's turn.*

On another: *The Law! The Law!*

It was within those walls that the Convention sat in judgment on Louis XVI.

At the Tuileries, where the Convention began to sit on the 10th of May, 1793, and which was called the Palais-National, the assembly-hall occupied the whole space between the Pavillon de l'Horloge (called the Pavilion of Unity) and the Pavillon Marsan, then named Pavilion of Liberty. The Pavilion of Flora was called Pavillon-Égalité. The hall was reached by the grand staircase of Jean Bullant. The whole ground-floor of the palace, beneath the story occupied by the Assembly, was a kind of long guard-room, littered with bundles and camp-beds of the armed troops who kept watch about the Convention. The Assembly had a guard of honor styled "the Grenadiers of the Convention."

A tricolored ribbon separated the palace where the Assembly sat from the garden in which the people came and went.

CHAPTER III.

LET us finish the description of that sessions-hall. Everything in regard to this terrible place is interesting.

What first struck the sight of anyone entering was a great statue of Liberty placed between two wide windows. One hundred and forty feet in length; thirty-four feet in width; thirty-seven feet in height: such were the dimensions of this room, which had been the king's theatre, and which became the théâtre of the Revolution. The elegant and magnificent hall, built by Vigarani for the courtiers, was hidden by the rude timber-work which in '93 supported the weight of the people. This framework, whereon the public tribunes were erected, had (a detail deserving notice) one single post for its only point of support. This post was of one piece, ten metres (32 feet 6 inches) in circumference. Few caryatides have labored like that beam; it supported for years the rude pressure of the Revolution. It sustained applause, enthusiasm, insolence, noise, tumult, riot—the immense chaos of opposing rages. It did not give way. After the Convention, it witnessed the Council of the Ancients. The 18th Brumaire relieved it.

Percier then replaced the wooden pillar by columns of marble, which did not last so well.

The ideal of architects is sometimes strange; the architect of the Rue de Rivoli had for his ideal the trajectory of a cannon-ball; the architect of Carlsruhe, a fan; a gigantic drawer would seem to have been the model of the architect who built the hall where the Convention began to sit on the 10th of May, 1793: it was long, high, and flat. At one of the sides of the parallelogram was a great semicircle; this amphitheatre contained the seats

of the representatives, but without tables or desks. Garan-Coulon, who wrote a great deal, held his paper on his knee. In front of the seats was the tribune; before the tribune, the bust of Lepelletier Saint-Fargeau; behind was the President's arm-chair.

The head of the bust passed a little beyond the ledge of the tribune, for which reason it was afterward moved away from that position.

The amphitheatre was composed of nineteen semicircular rows of benches, rising one behind the other; the supports of the seats prolonging the amphitheatre into the two corners.

Below, in the horse-shoe at the foot of the tribune, the ushers had their places.

On one side of the tribune, a placard nine feet in length was fastened to the wall in a black wooden frame, bearing on two leaves, separated by a sort of sceptre, the "Declaration of the Rights of Man;" on the other side was a vacant place, at a later period occupied by a similar frame, containing the Constitution of Year II., with the leaves divided by a sword. Above the tribune, over the head of the orator, from a deep *loge* with double compartments always filled with people, floated three immense tricolored flags, almost horizontal, resting on an altar upon which could be read the word—LAW. Behind this altar there arose, tall as a column, an enormous Roman fasces like the sentinel of free speech. Colossal statues, erect against the wall, faced the representatives. The President had Lycurgus on his right hand and Solon on his left; Plato towered above the Mountain.

These statues had plain blocks of wood for pedestals, resting on a long cornice which encircled the hall, and separated the people from the assembly. The spectators could lean their elbows on this cornice.

The black wooden frame of the proclamation of the Rights of Man reached to the cornice and broke the regularity of the entablature, an infraction of the straight line which caused Chabot to murmur: "It is ugly," he said to Vadier.

On the heads of the statues alternated crowns of oak-leaves and laurel. A green drapery, on which similar crowns were painted in deeper green, fell in heavy folds straight down from the cornice of circumference, and covered the whole wall of the ground-floor occupied by the assembly. Above this drapery the wall was white and naked. In it, as if hollowed out by a gigantic axe, without moulding or foliage, were two stories of public tribunes, the lower ones square, the upper ones round. According to rule, the archivolts were superimposed upon the architraves. There were ten tribunes on each side of the hall, and two huge boxes at either end; in all, twenty-four. There the crowds gathered thickly.

The spectators in the lower tribunes, overflowing their borders, grouped themselves along the reliefs of the cornice. A long iron bar, firmly fixed at the point of support, served as a rail to the upper tribunes, and guarded the spectators against the pressure of the throngs mounting the stairs. Nevertheless, a man was once thrown headlong into the assembly; he fell partly upon Massieu, Bishop of Beauvais, and thus was not killed; he said, "Hallo! Why a bishop is really good for something!"

The hall of the Convention could hold two thousand persons comfortably; on the days of insurrection it held three.

The Convention held two sittings, one in the daytime and one in the evening.

The back of the President's chair was curved, and studded with gilt nails. The table was upheld by four winged mon-

sters, with a single foot—one might have thought they had come out of the Apocalypse to assist at the Revolution. They seemed to have been unharnessed from Ezekiel's chariot to drag the dung-cart of Samson.

On the President's table was a huge hand-bell, almost large enough to have served for a church; a great copper ink-stand, and a parchment folio, which was the book of official reports.

Many times freshly severed heads, borne aloft on the tops of pikes, sprinkled their blood-drops over this table.

The tribune was reached by a staircase of nine steps. These steps were high, steep, and hard to mount. One day Gensonné stumbled as he was going up. "It is a scaffold-ladder," said he. "Serve your apprenticeship," Carrier cried out to him.

In the angles of the hall, where the wall had looked too naked, the architect had put Roman fasces for decorations, with the axe turned to the people.

At the right and left of the tribune were square blocks supporting two candelabra twelve feet in height, having each four pairs of lamps. There was a similar candelabrum in each public box. On the pedestals were carved circles, which the people called "guillotine-collars."

The benches of the Assembly reached almost to the cornice of the tribunes so that the representatives and the spectators could talk together.

The outlets from the tribunes led into a labyrinth of sombre corridors, often filled with a savage din.

The Convention overcrowded the palace and flowed into the neighboring mansions—the Hôtel de Longueville and the Hôtel de Coigny. It was to the Hôtel de Coigny, if one may believe a letter of Lord Bradford's, that the royal furni-

ture was carried after the 10th of August. It took two months to empty the Tuileries.

The committees were lodged in the neighborhood of the hall: in the Pavillon-Égalité were those of Legislation, Agriculture, and Commerce; in the Pavilion of Liberty were the Marine, the Colonies, Finance, Assignats, and Public Safety; the War Department was at the Pavilion of Unity.

The Committee of General Security communicated directly with that of Public Safety by an obscure passage, lighted day and night with a reflector lamp, where the spies of all parties came and went. People spoke there in whispers.

The bar of the Convention was several times displaced. Generally it was at the right of the President.

At the far ends of the hall the vertical partitions which closed the concentric semicircles of the amphitheatre left behind them and the wall a couple of narrow, deep passages, from which opened two dark square doors.

The representatives entered directly into the hall by a door opening on the Terrace des Feuillants.

This hall, dimly lighted during the day by deep-set windows, took a strange nocturnal aspect when, with the approach of twilight, it was badly illuminated by lamps. Their pale glare intensified the evening shadows, and the lamplight sessions were lugubrious.

It was impossible to see clearly; from the opposite ends of the hall, to the right and to the left, indistinct groups of faces insulted each other. People met without recognizing one another. One day Laiguelot, hurrying toward the tribune, hit against some person in the sloping passage between the benches. "Pardon, Robespierre," said he.—"For whom do

you take me?" replied a hoarse voice.—"Pardon, Marat," said Laiguelot.

At the bottom, to the right and left of the President, were two reserved tribunes—for, strange to say, the Convention had its privileged spectators. These tribunes were the only ones that had draperies. In the middle of the architrave two gold tassels held up the curtains. The tribunes of the people were bare. The whole surroundings were peculiar and savage, yet correct. Regularity in barbarism is rather a type of revolution. The hall of the Convention offered the most complete specimen of what artists have since called "architecture Messidor;" it was massive, and yet frail. The builders of that time mistook symmetry for beauty. The last word of the Renaissance had been uttered under Louis XV., and a reaction followed. The noble was pushed to insipidity, and the pure to absurdity. Prudery may exist in architecture. After the dazzling orgies of form and color of the eighteenth century, Art took to fasting, and only allowed herself the straight line. This species of progress ends in ugliness, and Art reduced to a skeleton is the phenomenon which results. The fault of this sort of wisdom and abstinence is that the style is so severe that it becomes meagre.

Outside of all political emotion, there was something in the very architecture of this hall which made one shiver. One recalled confusedly the ancient theatre with its garlanded boxes, its blue and crimson ceiling, its prised lustres, its girandoles with diamond reflections, its brilliant hangings, its profusion of Cupids and Nymphs on the curtain and draperies, the whole royal and amorous idyl—painted, sculptured, gilded—which had brightened this sombre spot with its smile, where now one saw on every side hard rec-

tilinear angles, cold and sharp as steel; it was something like Boucher guillotined by David.

CHAPTER IV.

BUT when one saw the Assembly, the hall was forgotten. Whoever looked at the drama no longer remembered the theatre. Nothing more chaotic and more sublime. A crowd of heroes; a mob of cowards. Fallow deer on a mountain; reptiles in a marsh. Therein swarmed, elbowed one another, provoked one another, threatened, struggled, and lived, all those combatants who are phantoms to-day.

A convocation of Titans.

To the right, the Gironde, a legion of thinkers; to the left, the Mountain, a group of athletes. On one side Brissot, who had received the keys of the Bastile; Barbaroux, whom the Marseilles troops obeyed; Kervélégan, who had under his hand the battalion of Brest, garrisoned in the Faubourg Saint-Marceau; Gensonné, who had established the supremacy of the representatives over the generals; the fatal Gaudet, to whom the queen one night, at the Tuileries, showed the sleeping Dauphin: Gaudet kissed the forehead of the child, and caused the head of the father to fall. Sallez, the crack-brained denouncer of the intimacy between the Mountain and Austria. Sillery, the cripple of the Right, as Couthon was the paralytic of the Left. Lause Duperret, who having been called a scoundrel by a journalist, invited him to dinner, saying, "I know that by scoundrel you simply mean a man who does not think like your-

self." Rabaut Saint-Étienne, who commenced his Almanac for 1790 with this saying: "The Revolution is ended." Quinette, one of those who overthrew Louis XVI.; the Jansenist Camus, who drew up the civil constitution of the clergy, believed in the miracles of the Deacon Paris, and prostrated himself each night before a figure of Christ seven feet high, which was nailed to the wall of his chamber. Fouchet, a priest, who, with Camille Desmoulins, brought about the 14th of July; Isnard, who committed the crime of saying "Paris will be destroyed" at the same moment when Brunswick was saying "Paris shall be burned." Jacob Dupont, the first who cried "I am an Atheist," and to whom Robespierre replied, "Atheism is aristocratic." Lanjuinais, stern, sagacious, and valiant Breton; Ducos, the Euryales of Boyerfrède; Rebecqui, the Pylades of Barbaroux: Rebecqui gave in his resignation because Robespierre had not yet been guillotined. Richaud, who combated the permanency of the Sections. Lasource, who had given utterance to the murderous apophthegm, "Woe to grateful nations!" and who was afterward to contradict himself at the foot of the scaffold by this haughty sarcasm flung at the Mountainists: "We die because the people sleep; you will die because the people awake." Biroteau, who caused the abolition of inviolability to be decreed; who was also, without knowing it, the forger of the axe, and raised the scaffold for himself. Charles Villatte, who sheltered his conscience behind this protest: "I will not vote under the hatchet." Louvet, the author of *Faublas*, who was to end as a bookseller in the Palais Royal, with Lodoiska behind the counter. Mercier, author of the *Picture of Paris*, who exclaimed, "On the 21st of January, all

kings felt for the backs of their necks !” * Marie, whose anxiety was “the faction of the ancient limits.” The journalist Carra, who said to the headsman at the foot of the scaffold, “It bores me to die. I would have liked to see the continuation.” Vigée, who called himself a grenadier in the second battalion of Mayenne and Loire, and who, when menaced by the public tribunals, cried, “I demand that at the first murmur of the tribunals we all withdraw and march on Versailles, sabre in hand !” Buzôt, reserved for death by famine ; Valazé, destined to die by his own dagger ; Condorcet, who was to perish at Bourg-la-Reine (become Bourg-Égalité), betrayed by the Horace which he had in his pocket ; Pétion, whose destiny was to be adored by the crowd in 1792 and devoured by wolves in 1794 : twenty others still—Pontecoulent, Marboz, Lidon, Saint-Martin, Dussaulx, the translator of Juvenal, who had been in the Hanover campaign ; Boileau, Bertrand, Lestep Beauvais, Lesage, Gommaire, Gardieu, Mainville, Duplentur, Lacaze, Antiboul, and at their head a Barnave, who was styled Vergniaud.

On the other side, Antoine Louis Léon Florelle de Saint-Just, pale, with a low forehead, a regular profile, eye mysterious, a profound sadness, aged twenty-three. Merlin de Thionville, whom the Germans called *feuerteufel*—“the fire-devil.” Merlin de Douai, the culpable author of the *Law of the Suspected*. Soubranz, whom the people of Paris at the first Prairial demanded for general. The ancient priest Lebon, holding a sabre in the hand which had sprinkled holy water ; Billaud Varennes, who foresaw the magistracy of the

future, without judges or arbiters ; Fabre d’Églantine, who fell upon a delightful God-send—the Republican Calendar, just as Rouget de Lisle had a single sublime inspiration—the *Marseillaise* ; neither one nor the other ever produced a second. Manuel, the attorney of the Commune, who had said, “A dead king is not a man the less.” Goujon, who had entered Tripstadt, Neustadt, and Spires, and had seen the Prussian army flee. Lacroix, a lawyer turned into a general, named Chevalier of Saint-Louis, six days before the 10th of August. Freron Thersite, the son of Freron Zoilus. Ruth, the inexorable of the iron press, predestined to a great republican suicide—he was to kill himself the day the Republic died. Fouché, with the soul of a demon and the face of a corpse. Camboulas, the friend of Father Duchesne, who said to Guillotin, “Thou belongest to the Club of the Feuillants, but thy daughter belongs to the Jacobin Club.” Jagot, who to such as complained to him of the nudity of the prisoners, replied by this savage saying, “A prison is a dress of stone.” Javogues, the terrible desecrator of the tombs of Saint-Denis. Osselin, a proscriber, who hid one of the proscribed (Madame Charry) in his house. Benta-bole, who, when he was in the chair, made signs to the tribunes to applaud or hoot. The journalist Robert, the husband of Mademoiselle Kéralio, who wrote : “Neither Robespierre nor Marat come to my house. Robespierre may come when he wishes—Marat, never.” Garan Coulon, who, when Spain interfered in the trial of Louis XVI., haughtily demanded that the Assembly should not deign to read the letter of a king in behalf of a king. Grégoire, a bishop, at first worthy of the Primitive Church, but who afterward, under the Empire, effaced Grégoire the Republican beneath the Count Grégoire.

* Boswell, the laird, father of Johnson’s biographer, had said the same some years before of Cromwell.

Amar, who said: "The whole earth condemns Louis XVI. To whom, then, appeal for judgment? To the planets?" Rouger, who, on the 21st of January, opposed the firing of the cannon of Pont Neuf, saying, "A king's head ought to make no more noise in falling than the head of another man."

Chénier, the brother of André; Vadier, one of those who laid a pistol on the tribune; Panis, who said to Momoro, "I wish Marat and Robespierre to embrace at my table."—"Where dost thou live?"—"At Charenton."—"Anywhere else would have astonished me," replied Momoro. Legendre, who was the butcher of the French Revolution, as Pride had been of the English. "Come, that I may knock you down," he cried to Lanjuinais.—"First have it decreed that I am a bullock," replied Lanjuinais. Collot d'Herbois, that lugubrious comedian who had the face of the antique mask, with two mouths which said yes and no, approving with one while he blamed with the other; branding Carrier at Nantes and defying Châlier at Lyons; sending Robespierre to the scaffold and Marat to the Pantheon. Génissieux, who demanded the penalty of death against whomsoever should have upon him a medallion of "Louis XVI. martyred." Léonard Bourdon, the schoolmaster, who had offered his house to the old men of Mont Jura. Topsent, sailor; Goupilleau, lawyer; Laurent Lecointre, merchant; Duhem, physician; Sergent, sculptor; David, painter; Joseph Égalité, prince.

Others still: Lecointe Puiraveau, who asked that a decree should be passed declaring Marat mad. Robert Lindet, the disquieting creator of that devil-fish whose head was the Committee of General Surety, and which covered France with its one-and-twenty thousand arms called revolu-

tionary committees. Leboeuf, upon whom Girez-Dupré, in his *Christmas of False Patriots*, had made this epigram: "*Leboeuf vit Legendre et beugla.*"

Thomas Payne, the clement American;* Anacharsis Cloots, German, baron, millionaire, atheist; Hébertist, candid. The upright Lebas, the friend of the Duplays. Rovère, one of those strange men who are wicked for wickedness' sake; for the art, from love of the art, exists more frequently than people believe. Charlier, who wished that "you" should be employed in addressing aristocrats. Tallien, elegiac and ferocious, who will bring about the 9th Thermidor from love. Cambacères, a lawyer, who will be a prince later. Carrier, an attorney, who will become a tiger. Laplanche, who will one day cry, "I demand priority for the alarm-gun." Thuriot, who desired the vote of the Revolutionary Tribunal to be given aloud. Bourdon de l'Oise, who challenged Chambon to a duel, denounced Payne, and was himself denounced by Hébert. Fayau, who proposed the sending of "an army of incendiaries" into the Vendée. Tavaux, who, on the 13th of April, was almost a mediator between the Gironde and the Mountain. Vernier, who proposed that the chiefs of

* "Thomas Payne, Américain et clément"—"Thomas Payne, an American and merciful." M. Hugo here means Tom Paine, the stay-maker and revolutionary Englishman, the author of the *Age of Reason*, and Mr. Carlyle's "rebellious needleman." Paine voted against the death of Louis XVI, was himself denounced, and escaped the guillotine as by a miracle—his door, marked for his execution, being turned back. So far from being an American, he had returned thence, and had lived for years in England; he was born at Thetford, in Norfolk, and was an English busybody, intruding in an assembly which should have been entirely French. He died in America, and William Cobbett brought his bones to England. They excited no attention.

the Gironde and the Mountain should be sent to serve as common soldiers. Rewbell, who shut himself up in Mayence. Bourbotte, who had his horse killed under him at the taking of Saumur. Guimberteau, who directed the army of the Cherbouurg coast. Jard Panvilliers, who managed the army of the coasts of Rochelle. Lecarpentier, who led the squadron of Cancale. Roberjot, for whom the ambush of Rastadt was waiting. Prieur of the Marne, who bore in camp his old rank of major. Levasseur de la S  rthe, who by a word decided Serrent, commandant of the battalion of Saint-Amand, to kill himself. Reverchon, Maure, Bernard de Saintes, Charles Richard, Lequinio, and at the summit of this group a Mirabeau, who was called Danton.

Outside the two camps, and keeping both in awe, rose the man Robespierre.

CHAPTER V.

BELOW crouched Dismay, which may be noble; and Fear, which is base. Beneath passions, beneath heroisms, beneath devotion, beneath rage, was the gloomy cohort of the Anonymous. The shoals of the Assembly were called the Plain. There was everything which floats; the men who doubt, who hesitate, who recoil, who adjourn, who wait, each one fearing somebody. The Mountain was made up of the Select; the Gironde of the Select; the Plain was a crowd. The Plain was summed up and condensed in Si  y  s.

Si  y  s, a profound man, who had grown chimerical. He had stopped at the Tiers-  tat, and had not been able to mount up to the people. Certain minds are made to

rest half-way. Si  y  s called Robespierre a tiger, and was called a mole by Robespierre. This metaphysician had stranded, not on wisdom, but prudence. He was the courtier, not the servitor, of the Revolution. He seized a shovel, and went with the people to work in the Champ de Mars; harnessed to the same cart as Alexander de Beauharnais. He counseled energy, but never showed it. He said to the Girondists, "Put the cannon on your side." There were thinkers who were wrestlers: those were, like Condorcet, with Vergniaud; or, like Camille Desmoulins, with Danton. There were thinkers whose aim was to preserve their lives: such were with Si  y  s. The best working vats have their lees. Underneath the Plain even was the Marsh, a hideous stagnation which exposed to view the transparencies of egotism. There shivered the fearful in dumb expectation. Nothing could be more abject. A conglomeration of shames feeling no shame; hidden rage; revolt under servitude. They were afraid in a cynical fashion; they had all the desperation of cowardice; they preferred the Gironde and chose the Mountain; the final catastrophe depended upon them; they poured toward the successful side; they delivered Louis XVI. to Vergniaud, Vergniaud to Danton, Danton to Robespierre, Robespierre to Tallien. They put Marat in the pillory when living, and deified him when dead. They upheld everything up to the day when they overturned everything. They had the instinct to give the decisive push to whatever tottered. In their eyes—since they had undertaken to serve on condition that the basis was solid—to waver was to betray them. They were number; they were force; they were fear. From thence came the audacity of turpitude.

Thence came May 31st, the 11th Ter-

minal, the 9th Thermidor: tragedies knotted by giants and untied by dwarfs.

CHAPTER VI.

AMONG these men full of passions were mingled men filled with dreams. Utopia was there under all its forms: under its warlike form, which admitted the scaffold, and under its innocent form, which would abolish capital punishment; phantom as it faced thrones; angel as it regarded the people. Side by side with the spirits that fought were the spirits that brooded. These had war in their heads, those peace. One brain, Carnot, brought forth fourteen armies; another intellect, Jean Debry, meditated a universal democratic federation.

Amid this furious eloquence, among these shrieking and growling voices, there were fruitful silences. Lakanal remained voiceless, and combined in his thoughts the system of public national education; Lanthenas held his peace, and created the primary schools; Revellière Lépeaux kept still, and dreamed of the elevation of Philosophy to the dignity of Religion. Others occupied themselves with questions of detail, smaller and more practical. Guyton Morveaux studied means for rendering the hospitals healthy; Maire, the abolition of existing servitudes; Jean Bon Saint-André, the suppression of imprisonment for debt and constraint of the person; Romme, the proposition of Chappe; Duboë, the putting the archives in order; Coren Fustier, the creation of the Cabinet of Anatomy and the Museum of Natural History; Guyomard, river navigation and the damming of the Escaut. Art had its fanatics and even its monoma-

niacs. On the 21st of January, while the head of monarchy was falling on the Place de la Revolution, Bézard, the representative of the Oise, went to see a picture of Rubens, which had been found in a garret in the Rue Saint-Lazare. Artists, orators, prophets, men-giants, like Danton, child-men like Cloots, gladiators and philosophers, all had the same goal—Progress. Nothing disconcerted them. The grandeur of the Convention was, the searching how much reality there is in what men call the impossible. At one extreme, Robespierre had his eye fixed on Law; at the other, Condorcet had his fixed on Duty. Condorcet was a man of revery and enlightenment. Robespierre was a man of execution; and sometimes, in the final crises of worn-out orders, execution means extermination. Revolutions have two currents—an ebb and a flow; and on these float all seasons, from that of ice to flowers. Each zone of these currents produces men adapted to its climate, from those who live in the sun to those who dwell among the thunderbolts.

CHAPTER VII.

PEOPLE showed each other the recess of the left-hand passage, where Robespierre had uttered low in the ear of Garat, Clavière's friend, this terrible epigram: "Clavière has conspired wherever he has respired." In this same recess, convenient for words needed to be spoken aside and for half-voiced cholers, Fabre d'Églantine had quarreled with Romme, and reproached him for having disfigured his calendar by changing Fervidor into Thermidor. So, too, was shown the angle

where, elbow to elbow, sat the seven representatives of the Haute-Garonne, who, first called to pronounce their verdict upon Louis XVI., thus responded, one after the other—Mailhe, “Death;” Delmas, “Death;” Projean, “Death;” Calès, “Death;” Ayrat, “Death;” Julien, “Death;” Desaby, “Death.”

Eternal reverberation, which fills all history, and which, since human justice has existed, has always given an echo of the sepulchre to the wall of the tribunal. People pointed out with their fingers, among that group of stormy faces, all the men from whose mouths had come the uproar of tragic notes. Paganel, who said—“Death! A king is only made useful by death.” Millaud, who said—“To-day, if death did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it.” The old Raffon du Trouillet, who said—“Speedy death!” Goupilleau, who cried—“The scaffold at once. Delay aggravates dying.” Siéyès, who said, with funereal brevity—“Death!” Thuriot—who had rejected the appeal to the people proposed by Buzot—“What! The primary assemblies! What! Forty-four thousand tribunals! A case without limit. The head of Louis XVI. would have time to whiten before it would fall.” Augustin Bon Robespierre, who, after his brother, cried—“I know nothing of the humanity which slaughters the people and pardons despots. Death! To demand a reprieve is to substitute an appeal to tyrants for the appeal to the people.” Foussedoire, the substitute of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, who had said—“I have a horror of human bloodshed, but the blood of a king is not a man’s blood. Death!” Jean Bon Saint-André, who said—“No free people without a dead tyrant.” Lavicomterie, who proclaimed this formula—“So long as the tyrant breathes, Liberty is suffocated! Death!”

Châteauneuf Randon, who had uttered this cry—“Death to the last Louis!” Guyard, who had said—“Let the Barrière Renversée (the overturned barrier) be executed.” The Barrière Renversée was the Barrière du Trône. Tellier, who had said—“Let there be forged, to aim against the enemy, a cannon of the calibre of Louis XVI.’s head.” And the indulgents: Gentil, who said—“I vote for confinement. To make a Charles I. is to make a Cromwell.” Bancal, who said—“Exile. I want to see the first king of the earth condemned to a trade in order to earn his livelihood.” Albouys, who said — “Banishment! Let this living ghost go wander among the thrones.” Zangiacomi, who said — “Confinement. Let us keep Capet alive as a scarecrow.” Chaillon, who said—“Let him live. I do not wish to make a dead man of whom Rome will make a saint.”

While these sentences fell from those severe lips and dispersed themselves one after another into history, women in low-necked dresses and decorated with gems sat in the tribunes, list in hand, counting the voices and pricking each vote with a pin.

Where tragedy entered, horror and pity remain.

To see the Convention, no matter at what period of its reign, was to see anew the trial of the last Capet. The legend of the 21st of January seemed mingled with all its acts; the formidable Assembly was full of those fatal breaths which blew upon the old torch of monarchy, that had burned for eighteen centuries, and extinguished it. The decisive trials of all kings in that judgment pronounced upon one king was like the point of departure in the great war made against the Past. Whatever might be the sitting of the Convention at which one was present, the

shadow of Louis XVI.'s scaffold was seen thrust forward within it. Spectators recounted to one another the resignation of Kersaint, the resignation of Roland, Duchâtel, the deputy of the Deux-Sèvres, who, being ill, had himself carried to the Convention on his bed, and dying voted the king's life, which caused Marat to laugh; and they sought with their eyes the representative whom history has forgotten, he who, after that session of thirty-seven hours, fell back on his bench overcome by fatigue and sleep, and when roused by the usher as his turn to vote arrived, half opened his eyes, said "*Death*," and fell asleep again.

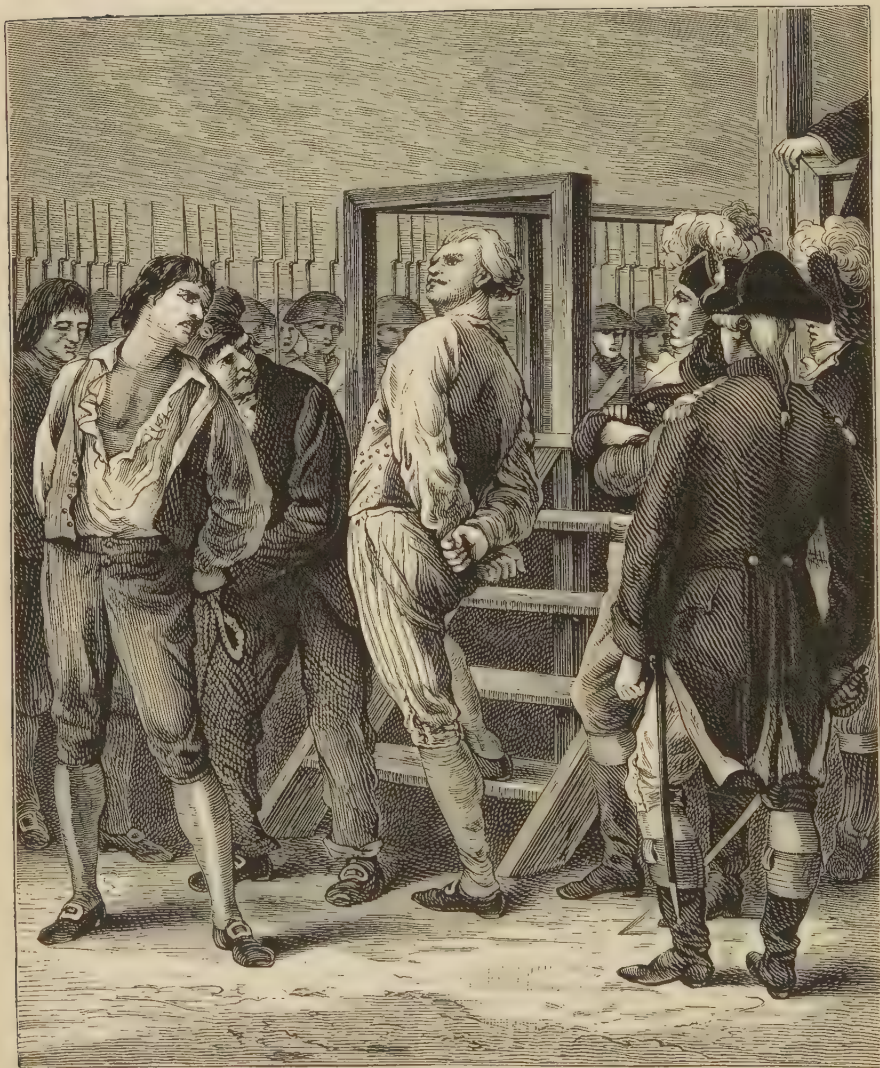
At the moment Louis XVI. was condemned to death, Robespierre had still eighteen months to live; Danton, fifteen months; Vergniaud, nine months; Marat, five months and three weeks; Lepelletier Saint-Fargeau, one day. Quick and terrible blast from human mouths!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE people had a window opening on the Convention—the public tribunes; and, when the window was not sufficient, they opened the door, and the street entered the Assembly. These invasions of the crowd into that senate make one of the most astounding visions of history. Ordinarily those irruptions were amicable. The market-place fraternized with the curule chair. But it was a formidable cordiality—that of a people who one day took within three hours the cannon of the Invalides and forty thousand muskets besides. At each instant a troop interrupted the deliberations; deputations presented

at the bar petitions, homages, offerings. The pike of honor of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine entered, borne by women. Certain English offered twenty thousand pairs of shoes for the naked feet of our soldiers. "The citizen Arnoux," announced the *Moniteur*, "Curé of Aubignan, Commandant of the Battalion of Drôme, asks to march to the frontiers, and desires that his curé may be preserved for him."

Delegates from the Sections arrived, bringing on hand-barrows dishes, patens, chalices, monstrances, heaps of gold, silver, and enamel, presented to the country by this multitude in rags, who demanded for recompense the permission to dance the Carmagnole before the Convention. Chenard, Narbonne, and Vallière came to sing couplets in honor of the Mountain. The Section of Mont Blanc brought the bust of Lepelletier, and a woman placed a red cap on the head of the President, who embraced her. The citizenesses of the Section of the Mail "flung flowers" to the legislators. "The pupils of the country" came, headed by music, to thank the Convention for having prepared the prosperity of the century. The women of the Section of the Gardes Françaises offered roses; the women of the Champs Elysées Section gave a crown of oak-leaves; the women of the Section of the Temple came to the bar to swear "only to unite themselves with true Republicans." The Section of Molière presented a medal of Franklin, which was suspended by decree to the crown of the statue of Liberty. The Foundlings—declared the Children of the Republic—filed through, habited in the national uniform. The young girls of the Section of Ninety-two arrived in long white robes, and the *Moniteur* of the following morning contained this line—"The President received a bouquet from the innocent



DESMOULIN AND DANTON AT THE SCAFFOLD.

Hugo, vol. IV., p. 306.

hands of a young beauty." The orators saluted the crowds, sometimes flattered them: they said to the multitude, "*Thou art infallible; thou art irreproachable; thou art sublime.*" The people has an infantile side; it likes those sugar-plums. Sometimes Riot traversed the Assembly: entered furious and withdrew appeased, like the Rhone which traverses Lake Lemman, and is mud when it enters and pure and azure when it pours out.

Sometimes the crowd was less pacific, and Henriot was obliged to come with his "bullet-heaters" to the entrance of the Tuileries.

CHAPTER IX.

At the same time that it threw off revolution, this Assembly produced civilization. Furnace, but forge too. In this caldron, where terror bubbled, progress fermented. Out of this chaos of shadow, this tumultuous flight of clouds, spread immense rays of light parallel to the eternal laws. Rays that have remained on the horizon, visible forever in the heaven of the peoples, and which are, one, Justice; another, Tolerance; another, Goodness; another, Right; another, Truth; another, Love. The Convention promulgated this grand axiom: "*The liberty of each citizen ends where the liberty of another citizen commences;*" which comprises in two lines all human social law. It declared indigence sacred; it declared infirmity sacred in the blind and the deaf and dumb, who became wards of the state; maternity sacred in the girl-mother, whom it consoled and lifted up; infancy sacred in the orphan, whom it caused to be

adopted by the country; innocence sacred in the accused who was acquitted, whom it indemnified. It branded the slave-trade; it abolished slavery. It proclaimed civic joint responsibility. It decreed gratuitous instruction. It organized national education by the normal school of Paris; central schools in the chief towns; primary schools in the communes. It created the academies of music and the museums. It decreed the unity of the Code, the unity of weights and measures, and the unity of calculation by the decimal system. It established the finances of France, and caused public credit to succeed to the long monarchical bankruptcy. It put the telegraph in operation; to old age it gave endowed almshouses; to sickness, purified hospitals; to instruction, the Polytechnic School; to science, the Bureau of Longitudes; to human intellect, the Institute. At the same time that it was national it was cosmopolitan. Of the eleven thousand two hundred and ten decrees which emanated from the Convention, a third had a political aim, two-thirds a human aim.

It declared universal morality the basis of Society, and universal conscience the basis of Law. And all that servitude abolished, fraternity proclaimed, humanity protected, human conscience rectified, the law of work transformed into right, and from onerous made honorable—national riches consolidated, childhood instructed and raised up, letters and sciences propagated, light illuminating all heights, aid to all sufferings, promulgation of all principle—the Convention accomplished, having in its bowels that hydra, the Vendée, and upon its shoulders that heap of tigers, the kings.

CHAPTER X.

STUPENDOUS concourse ! All types were there — human, inhuman, superhuman. Epic gathering of antagonisms. Guilotin avoiding David, Bazire insulting Chabot, Gaudet mocking Saint-Just, Vergniaud disdaining Danton, Louvet attacking Robespierre, Buzot denouncing Égalité, Champon branding Pache, all execrating Marat. And how many names remain still to be registered ! Armonville, styled Bonnet Rouge, because he always attended the sittings in a Phrygian cap, a friend of Robespierre, and wishing, “after Louis XVI., to guillotine Robespierre in order to restore an equilibrium.” Massieu, colleague and counterpart of that good Lamourette, a bishop destined to leave his name to a kiss. Lehardy du Morbihan, stigmatizing the priests of Brittany ; Barère, the man of majorities, who presided when Louis XVI. appeared at the bar, and who was to Paméla what Louvet was to Lodoviska ; the Oratorian Daunou, who said, “Let us gain time ;” Dubois Crancé, close to whose ear leaned Marat ; the Marquis de Châteauneuf, Laclos, Hérault de Séchelles, who recoiled before Henriot, crying, “Gunners, to your pieces !” Julien, who compared the Mountain to Thermopylæ ; Gamon, who desired a public tribune reserved solely for women ; Laloy, who adjudged the honors of the séance to the Bishop Gobel coming into the Convention to lay down his mitre and put on the red cap ; Lecomte, who exclaimed, “So the honors are for whosoever will unfrock himself !”

Féraud, whose head Boissy d’Anglas saluted, leaving this question to history : “Did Boissy d’Anglas salute the head, that is to say, the victim, or the pike, that is to say, the assassins ?” The two

brothers Duprat, one a member of the Mountain, the other of the Gironde, who hated each other like the two brothers Chénier.

At this tribune were uttered those mysterious words which sometimes possess unconsciously to those who pronounce them the prophetic accent of revolutions, and in whose wake material facts appear suddenly to assume an inexplicable discontent and passion, as if they had taken umbrage at the things just heard ; events seem angered by words ; catastrophes follow furious, and as if exasperated by the speech of men. Thus a voice upon a mountain suffices to set the avalanche in motion. A word too much may be followed by a landslide. If no one had spoken the catastrophe would not have happened. You might say sometimes that events are irascible.

It was thus, by the hazard of an orator’s ill-comprehended word, that Madame Elizabeth’s head fell. At the Convention intemperance of language was a right. Threats flew about and crossed one another like sparks in a conflagration.

Pétion : “Robespierre, come to the point.”

Robespierre : “The point is yourself, Pétion ; I shall come to it, and you will see it.”

A voice : “Death to Marat.”

Marat : “The day Marat dies there will be no more Paris, and the day that Paris expires there will be no longer a Republic.”

Billaud Varennes rises, and says, “We wish—”

Barère interrupts him : “Thou speakest like a king.”

Another day, Philippeaux says, “A member has drawn his sword upon me.”

Audouin: "President, call the assassin to order."

The President: "Wait."

Panis: "President, I call you to order—I!"

There was rude laughter moreover.

Lecointre: "The Curé of Chant de Bout complains of Fauchet, his bishop, who forbids his marrying."

A voice: "I do not see why Fauchet, who has mistresses, should wish to hinder others from having wives."

A second voice: "Priest, take a wife!"

The galleries joined in the conversation. They said "thee" and "thou" to the members. One day the representative Raumps mounted the tribune. He had one hip very much larger than the other. A spectator, crying out, thus jeered him: "Turn that toward the Right, since thou hast a cheek *à la David*."

Such were the liberties the people took with the Convention.

On one occasion, however, during the tumult of the 11th of April, 1793, the President commanded a disorderly person in the tribunes to be arrested.

One day when the session had for witness the old Buonarrotti, Robespierre takes the floor and speaks for two hours, staring at Danton, sometimes straight in the face, which was serious, sometimes obliquely, which was worse. He thunders on to the end, however. He closes with an indignant outburst full of menacing words. "The conspirators are known; the corrupters and the corrupted are known; the traitors are known; they are in this assembly. They hear us; we see them, and we do not move our eyes from them. Let them look above their heads, and they will see the sword of the law; let them look into their conscience, and they will see their own infamy. Let them beware." And, when Robespierre has finished, Dan-

ton, with his face raised toward the ceiling, his eyes half closed, one arm hanging loosely down, throws himself back in his seat, and is heard to hum—

"Cadet Roussel fait des discours,
Qui ne sont pas longs quand ils sont courts."*

Imprecations followed one another. Conspirator! Assassin! Scoundrel! Factionist! Moderate! They denounced each other to the bust of Brutus that stood there. Apostrophes, insults, challenges. Furious glances from one side to the other; fists shaken; pistols allowed to be seen; poniards half drawn. Terrible blazing forth in the tribune. Certain persons talked as if they were driven back against the guillotine. Heads wavered, frightened and awed. Mountainists, Girondists, Feuillantists, Moderates, Terrorists, Jacobins, Cordeliers, eighteen régicide priests.

All these men, a mass of vapors driven wildly in every direction.

CHAPTER XI.

SPIRITS which were a prey of the wind.

But this was a miracle-working wind. To be a member of the Convention was to be a wave of the ocean. This was true even of the greatest there. The force of impulsion came from on high. There was a Will in the Convention which was that of all and yet not that of any one person. This Will was an Idea, an idea indomitable and immeasurable, which swept from the summit of Heaven into the darkness below. We call this Revolution.

* "Cadet Roussel doth make his speech
Quite short when it no length doth reach."

When that Idea passed, it beat down one and raised up another; it scattered this man into foam and dashed that one upon the reefs. This Idea knew whither it was going, and drove the whirlpool before it. To ascribe the Revolution to men is to ascribe the tide to the waves.

The Revolution is a work of the Unknown. Call it good or bad, according as you yearn toward the future or the past, but leave it to the power which caused it. It seems the joint work of grand events and grand individualities mingled, but it is in reality the result of events. Events dispense; men suffer. Events dictate; men sign. The 14th of July is signed Camille Desmoulins; the 10th of August is signed Danton; the 2d of September is signed Marat; the 21st of September is signed Grégoire; the 21st of January is signed Robespierre; but Desmoulins, Danton, Marat, Grégoire, and Robespierre are mere scribes. The great and mysterious writer of these grand pages has a name—God; and a mask—Destiny. Robespierre believed in God—yea, verily!

The Revolution is a form of the eternal phenomenon which presses upon us from every quarter, and which we call Necessity.

Before this mysterious complication of benefits and sufferings arises the Wherefore of History.

Because—This answer of him who knows nothing is equally the response of him who knows all.

In presence of these climacteric catastrophes which devastate and revivify Civilization, one hesitates to judge their details. To blame or praise men on account of the result is almost like praising or blaming ciphers on account of the total. That which ought to happen happens; the blast which ought to blow blows. The

Eternal Serenity does not suffer from these north winds. Above revolutions Truth and Justice remain as the starry sky lies above and beyond tempests.

CHAPTER XII.

SUCH was this unmeasured and immeasurable Convention; a camp cut off from the human race, attacked by all the powers of darkness at once; the night-fires of the besieged army of Ideas; a vast bivouac of Minds upon the edge of a precipice. There is nothing in history comparable to this group, at the same time senate and populace, conclave and street-crossing, Areopagus and public square, tribunal and the accused.

The Convention always bent to the wind; but that wind came from the mouth of the people and was the breath of God. And to-day, after eighty-four years have passed away, always when the Convention presents itself before the reflection of any man, whosoever he may be—historian or philosopher—that man pauses and meditates. It would be impossible not to remain thoughtfully attentive before this grand procession of shadows.

CHAPTER XIII.

MARAT IN THE GREEN-ROOM.

MARAT, in accordance with his declaration to Simonne Évrard, went to the Convention the morning after that interview in the Rue du Paon.

There was in the Convention a marquis who was a Maratist, Louis de Montaut, the same who afterward presented to the Convention a decimal clock surmounted by the bust of Marat.

At the moment Marat entered, Chabot had approached De Montaut. He began: "Ci-devant—"

Montaut raised his eyes. "Why do you call me ci-devant?"

"Because you are so."

"I?"

"For you were a marquis."

"Never."

"Bah!"

"My father was a soldier; my grandfather was a weaver."

"What song is that you are singing, Montaut?"

"I do not call myself Montaut."

"What do you call yourself then?"

"Maribon."

"In point of fact," said Chabot, "it is all the same to me." And he added between his teeth, "No marquis on any terms."

Marat paused in the corridor to the left and watched Montaut and Chabot.

Whenever Marat entered, there was a buzz, but afar from him. About him people kept silence. Marat paid no attention thereto. He disdained "the croaking of the mud-pool."

In the gloomy obscurity of the lower row of seats, Conpé de l'Oise, Prunelle, Villars, a bishop who was afterward a member of the French Academy, Bouteroue, Petit, Plaichard, Bonet, Thibeaudeau, and Valdruche pointed him out to one another.

"See, Marat!"

"Then he is not ill?"

"Yes, for he is here in a dressing-gown."

"In a dressing-gown!"

"Zounds, yes!"

"He takes liberties enough!"

"He dares to come like that into the Convention!"

"As he came one day crowned with laurels, he may certainly come in a dressing-gown."

"Face of brass and teeth of verdigris."

"His dressing-gown looks new."

"What is it made of?"

"Reps."

"Striped."

"Look at the lapels."

"They are fur."

"Tiger skin."

"No; ermine."

"Imitation."

"He has stockings on!"

"That is odd."

"And shoes with buckles!"

"Of silver!"

"Camboulas's sabots will not pardon that."

People in other seats affected not to see Marat. They talked of indifferent matters. Santhonax accosted Dussaulx.

"Have you heard, Dussaulx?"

"What?"

"The ci-devant Count de Brienne?"

"Who was in La Force with the ci-devant Duke de Villeroy?"

"Yes."

"I knew them both. Well?"

"They were so horribly frightened that they saluted all the red caps of all the turnkeys, and one day they refused to play a game of piquet because somebody offered them cards that had kings and queens among them."

"Well?"

"They were guillotined yesterday."

"The two of them?"

"Both."

"Indeed; how had they behaved in prison?"

"As cowards."

"And how did they show on the scaffold?"

"Intrepid."

Then Dussaulx ejaculated, "It is easier to die than to live!"

Barère was reading a report; it was in regard to the Vendée. Nine hundred men of Morbihan had started with cannon to assist Nantes. Redon was menaced by the peasants. Paimbœuf had been attacked. A fleet was cruising about Main-drin to prevent invasions. From Ingrandes, as far as Maure, the entire left bank of the Loire was bristling with Royalists batteries. Three thousand peasants were masters of Pornic. They cried, "Long live the English!" A letter from Santerre to the Convention, which Barère was reading, ended with these words:

"Seven thousand peasants attacked Vannes. We repulsed them, and they have left in our hands four cannon—"

"And how many prisoners?" interrupted a voice.

Barère continued: "Postscript of the letter. 'We have no prisoners, because we no longer make any.' " *

Marat, standing motionless, did not listen; he appeared absorbed by a stern preoccupation. He held in his hand a paper, which he crumpled between his fingers; had any one unfolded it, he might have read these lines in Momoro's writing—probably a response to some question he had been asked by Marat—"No opposition can be offered to the full powers of delegated commissioners, above all, those of the Committee of Public Safety. Genissieux said in the sitting of May 6th, 'Each Commissioner is more than a king;' it had no effect. Life and death are in their hands. Massade to

Angers; Trullard to Saint-Amand; Nyon near General Marcé; Parrein to the army of Sables; Millier to the army of Niort: they are all-powerful. The club of the Jacobins has gone so far as to name Parrein brigadier-general. The circumstances excuse everything. A delegate from the Committee of Public Safety holds in check a commander-in-chief."

Marat ceased crumpling the paper, put it in his pocket, and walked slowly toward Montaut and Chabot, who continued to converse, and had not seen him enter.

Chabot was saying: "Maribon, or Montaut, listen to this: I have just come from the Committee of Public Safety."

"And what is being done there?"

"They are setting a priest to watch a noble."

"Ah!"

"A noble like yourself—"

"I am not a noble," interrupted Montaut.

"To be watched by a priest—"

"Like you."

"I am not a priest," said Chabot.

They both began to laugh.

"Make your story explicit," resumed Montaut.

"Here it is, then. A priest named Cimourdain is delegated with full powers to a viscount named Gauvain; this viscount commands the exploring column of the army of the coast. The question will be to keep the nobleman from trickery and the priest from treason."

"It is very simple," replied Montaut. "It is only necessary to bring death into the matter."

"I come for that," said Marat.

They looked up.

"Good morning, Marat," said Chabot.

"You rarely attend our meetings."

"My doctor has ordered me baths," answered Marat.

* *Moniteur*, b. xix., p. 81.

"One should beware of baths," returned Chabot. "Seneca died in one."

Marat smiled.

"Chabot, there is no Nero here."

"Yes, there is you," said a rude voice.

It was Danton who passed and ascended to his seat. Marat did not turn round. He thrust his head in between Montaut and Chabot.

"Listen; I come about a serious matter—one of us three must propose to-day the draft of a decree to the Convention."

"Not I," said Montaut;—"I am never listened to. I am a marquis."

"And I," said Chabot—"I am not listened to. I am a Capuchin."

"And I," said Marat—"I am not listened to. I am Marat."

There was a silence among them.

It was not safe to interrogate Marat when he appeared preoccupied, still Montaut hazarded a question.

"Marat, what is the decree that you wish passed?"

"A decree to punish with death any military chief who allows a rebel prisoner to escape."

Chabot interrupted: "The decree exists; it was passed in April."

"Then it is just the same as if it did not exist," said Marat. "Everywhere, all through Vendée, anybody who chooses helps prisoners to escape and gives them an asylum with impunity."

"Marat, the fact is, the decree has fallen into disuse."

"Chabot, it must be put into force anew."

"Without doubt."

"And to do that the Convention must be addressed."

"Marat, the Convention is not necessary; the Committee of Public Safety will suffice."

"The end will be gained," added Mon-

taut, "if the Committee of Public Safety cause the decree to be placarded in all the communes of the Vendée, and make two or three good examples."

"Of men in high position," returned Chabot—"of generals."

Marat grumbled: "In fact, that will answer."

"Marat," resumed Chabot, "go yourself and say that to the Committee of Public Safety."

Marat stared straight into his eyes, which was not pleasant, even for Chabot.

"The Committee of Public Safety," said he, "sits in Robespierre's house—I do not go there."

"I will go myself," said Montaut.

"Good," said Marat.

The next morning an order from the Committee of Public Safety was sent in all directions among the towns and villages of Vendée, enjoining the publication and strict execution of the decree of death against any person conniving at the escape of brigands and captive insurgents. This decree proved only a first step: the Convention was to go further than that. A few months later, the 11th Brumaire, Year II. (November, 1793), when Laval opened its gates to the Vendean fugitives, the Convention decreed that any city giving asylum to the rebels should be demolished and destroyed. On their side, the princes of Europe, in the manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, conceived by the emigrants and drawn up by the Marquis de Linnon, intendant of the Duke of Orleans, had declared that every Frenchman taken with arms in his hand should be shot, and that, if a hair of the king's head fell, Paris should be razed to the ground.

Cruelty against barbarity.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAPTER I.

THE FORESTS.

THERE were at that time seven ill-famed forests in Brittany. The Vendean war was a revolt of priests. This revolt had the forests as auxiliaries. The spirits of darkness aid one another.

The seven Black Forests of Brittany were the forest of Fougères, which stopped the way between Dol and Avranches; the forest of Princé, which was eight leagues in circumference; the forest of Paimpol, full of ravines and brooks, almost inaccessible on the side toward Baignon, with an easy retreat upon Concornel, which was a royalist town; the forest of Rennes, from whence could be heard the tocsin of the Republican parishes—always numerous in the neighborhood of the cities—it was in this forest that Puyssage lost Focard; the forest of Machecoul, which had Charette for its wild beast; the forest of Garnache, which belonged to the Trémouilles, the Gauvains, and the Rohans; and the forest of Brocéliande, which belonged to the fairies.

One gentleman of Brittany bore the title of Lord of the Seven Forests: this was the Viscount de Fontenay, Breton prince. For the Breton prince existed distinct from the French prince. The Rohans were Breton princes. Garnier de Saintes, in his report to the Convention of the 15th Nivose, Year II., thus distinguishes the Prince de Talmont: "This Capet of the brigands, Sovereign of Maine and of Normandy." The record of the Breton forests, from 1792 to 1800, would form a history of itself, mingling like a

legend with the vast undertaking of the Vendée.

History has its truth: Legend has hers. Legendary truth is wholly different from historic. Legendary truth is invention that has reality for a result. Still history and legend have the same aim, that of depicting the external type of humanity.

The Vendée can only be completely understood by adding legend to history; the latter is needed to describe its entirety, the former the details.

We may say, too, that the Vendée is worth the pains. The Vendée was a prodigy.

This war of the Ignorant, so stupid and so splendid, so abject yet magnificent, was at once the desolation and the pride of France. The Vendée is a wound which is at the same time a glory.

At certain crises human society has its enigmas—enigmas which resolve themselves into light for sages, but which the ignorant in their darkness translate into violence and barbarism. The philosopher is slow to accuse. He takes into consideration the agitation caused by these problems, which cannot pass without casting about them shadows dark as those of the storm-cloud. If one wish to comprehend the Vendée, one must picture to one's self this antagonism: on one side the French Revolution, on the other the Breton peasant. In face of these unparalleled events—an immense promise of all benefits at once—a fit of rage for civilization—an excess of maddened progress—an improvement that exceeded measure and comprehension—must be placed this grave, strange, savage man, with an eagle glance and flowing hair, living on milk and chestnuts, his ideas bounded by his thatched roof, his hedge, and his ditch, able to distinguish the sound of each vil-

lage bell in the neighborhood, using water only to drink, wearing a leather jacket covered with silken arabesques—uncultivated but clad embroidered—tattooing his garments as his ancestors the Celts had tattooed their faces, looking up to a master in his executioner, speaking a dead language, which was like forcing his thoughts to dwell in a tomb; driving his bullocks, sharpening his scythe, winnowing his black grain, kneading his buckwheat biscuit, venerating his plow first, his grandmother next; believing in the Blessed Virgin and the White Lady; devoted to the altar, but also to the lofty mysterious stone standing in the midst of the moor; a laborer in the plain, a fisher on the coast, a poacher in the thicket, loving his kings, his lords, his priests, his very lice; pensive, often immovable for entire hours upon the great deserted sea-shore, a melancholy listener to the sea.

Then ask yourself if it would have been possible for this blind man to welcome that light.

CHAPTER II.

THE PEASANTS.

The peasant had two points on which he leaned: the field which nourished him, the wood which concealed him.

It is difficult to picture to one's self what those Breton forests really were; they were towns. Nothing could be more secret, more silent, and more savage than those inextricable entanglements of thorns and branches; those vast thickets were the home of immobility and silence; no solitude could present an appearance more

death-like and sepulchral; yet if it had been possible to fell those trees at one blow, as by a flash of lightning, a swarm of men would have stood revealed in those shades. There were wells, round and narrow, masked by coverings of stones and branches, the interior at first vertical, then horizontal, spreading out underground like funnels, and ending in dark chambers; Cambyzes found such in Egypt, and Westermann found the same in Brittany. There they were found in the desert, here in the forest; the caves of Egypt held dead men, the caves of Brittany were filled with the living. One of the wildest glades of the wood of Misdon, perforated by galleries and cells amid which came and went a mysterious society, was called "the great city." Another glade, not less deserted above ground and not less inhabited beneath, was styled "the place royal." This subterranean life had existed in Brittany from time immemorial. From the earliest days man had there hidden, flying from man. Hence those hiding-places, like the dens of reptiles, hollowed out below the trees. They dated from the era of the Druids, and certain of those crypts were as ancient as the cromlechs. The larvæ of legend and the monsters of history all passed across that shadowy land. Teutatès, Cæsar, Hoël, Nornenes, Geoffrey of England, Alain of the iron glove, Pierre Manclerc, the French house of Blois, the English house of Montfort, kings and dukes, the nine barons of Brittany, the judges of the Great Days, the Comte of Nantes contesting with the Counts of Rennes, highwaymen, banditti, Free Lances, René II., Viscount de Rohan, the governors for the king, "the good Duke of Chaulnes," aiming at the peasants under the windows of Madame de Sévigné; in the fifteenth century, the butcheries by the nobles; in the sixteenth

and seventeenth centuries, the wars of religion; in the eighteenth century, the thirty thousand dogs trained to hunt men. Beneath these pitiless trappings the inhabitants made up their minds to disappear. Each in turn—the Troglodytes to escape the Celts, the Celts to escape the Romans, the Bretons to escape the Normans, the Huguenots to escape the Roman Catholics, the smugglers to escape the excise officers—took refuge first in the forests and then underground—the resource of hunted animals. It is this to which tyranny reduces nations. During two thousand years despotism under all its forms—conquest, feudality, fanaticism, taxes—beset this wretched, distracted Brittany: a sort of inexorable battue, which only ceased under one shape to recommence under another. Men hid underground. When the French Republic burst forth, Terror, which is a species of rage, was already latent in human souls, and when the Republic burst forth, the dens were ready in the woods. Brittany revolted, finding itself oppressed by this forced deliverance—a mistake natural to slaves.

CHAPTER III.

CONNIVANCE OF MEN AND FORESTS.

THE gloomy Breton forests took up anew their ancient rôle, and were the servants and accomplices of this rebellion, as they had been of all others. The subsoil of every forest was a sort of madrepore, pierced and traversed in all directions by a secret highway of mines, cells, and galleries. Each one of these blind cells could shelter five or six men. There are in ex-

istence certain strange lists which enable one to understand the powerful organization of that vast peasant rebellion. In Ille-et-Vilaine, in the forest of Pertre, the refuge of the Prince de Talmont, not a breath was heard, not a human trace to be found, yet there were collected six thousand men under Focard. In the forest of Meulac, in Morbihan, not a soul was to be seen, yet it held eight thousand men. Still, these two forests, Pertre and Meulac, do not count among the great Breton forests. If one trod there, the explosion was terrible. Those hypocritical copses, filled with fighters waiting in a sort of underground labyrinth, were like enormous black sponges, whence, under the pressure of the gigantic foot of Revolution, civil war spurted out.

Invisible battalions lay there in wait. These untrackable armies wound along beneath the Republican troops; burst suddenly forth from the earth and sank into it again, sprang up in numberless force and vanished at will, gifted with a strange ubiquity and power of disappearance; an avalanche at one instant, gone like a cloud of dust at the next; colossal, yet able to become pigmies at will; giants in battle, dwarfs in ability to conceal themselves—jaguars with the habits of moles.

There were not only the forests, there were the woods. Just as below cities there are villages, below these forests there were woods and underwoods.

The forests were united by the labyrinths (everywhere scattered) of the woods. The ancient castles, which were fortresses, the hamlets, which were camps, the farms, which were inclosures for ambushes and snares, traversed by ditches and palisaded by trees, were the meshes of the net in which the Republican armies were caught.

This whole formed what was called the *Bocage*.

There was the wood of Misdon, which had a pond in its centre, and which was held by Jean Chouan; there was the wood of Gennes, which belonged to Taillefer; there was the wood of Huisserie, which belonged to Gouge-le-Bruant; the wood of Charnie, where lurked Courtillé-le-Batard, called Saint-Paul, chief of the camp of the Vache Noire; the wood of Burgault, which was held by that enigmatical Monsieur Jacques, reserved for a mysterious end in the vault of Juvardail; there was the wood of Charreau, where Pimousse and Petit-Prince, when attacked by the garrison of Châteauneuf, rushed forward and seized the grenadiers in the Republican ranks about the waist and carried them back prisoners; the wood of La Henreusine, the witness of the rout of the military post of Longue-Faze; the wood of Aulne, whence the route between Rennes and Laval could be overlooked; the wood of La Travalle, which a prince of La Trémouille had won at a game of bowls; the wood of Lorges, in the Colis-du-Nord, where Charles de Boishardy reigned after Bernard de Villeneuve; the wood of Baynard, near Fontenay, where Lescure offered battle to Chalbos, who accepted the challenge, although one against five; the wood of La Durondais, which in old days had been disputed by Alain le Redru and Hérispoux, the son of Charles the Bold; the wood of Croqueloup, upon the edge of that moor where Coquereau sheared the prisoners; the wood of Croix-Bataille, which witnessed the Homeric insults of Jambe d'Argent to Morière, and of Morière to Jambe d'Argent; the wood of La Saudraie, which we have seen being searched by a Paris regiment. There were many others besides. In several of these forests and woods there

were not only subterranean villages grouped about the burrow of the chief, but also actual hamlets of low huts, hidden under the trees, sometimes so numerous that the forest was filled with them. Frequently they were betrayed by the smoke. Two of these hamlets of the wood of Misdon have remained famous: Lorrière, near the pond, and the group of cabins called the Rue de Bau, on the side toward Saint-Ouen-les-Torts.

The women lived in the huts, and the men in the cellars. In carrying on the war, they utilized the galleries of the fairies and the old Celtic mines. Food was carried to the buried men. Some were forgotten and died of hunger; but these were awkward fellows who had not known how to open the mouth of their well. Usually the cover, made of moss and branches, was so artistically fashioned that, although impossible on the outside to distinguish from the surrounding turf, it was very easy to open and close on the inside. These hiding-places were dug with care. The earth taken out of the well was flung into some neighboring pond. The sides and the bottom were carpeted with ferns and moss. These nooks were called "lodges." The men were as comfortable there as could be expected, considering that they lacked light, fire, bread and air.

It was a difficult matter to unbury themselves and come up among the living without great precaution. They might find themselves between the legs of an army on the march. These were formidable woods: snares with a double trap. The Blues dared not enter, the Whites dared not come out.

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE UNDERGROUND.

THE men grew weary of their wild-beast lairs. Sometimes in the night they came forth at any risk, and went to dance upon the neighboring moor, else they prayed, in order to kill time. "Every day," says Bourdoiseau, "Jean Chouan made us count our rosaries."

It was almost impossible to keep those of the Bas-Maine from going out for the Fête de la Gerbe when the season came. Some of them had ideas peculiar to themselves. "Denys," says Franche Montague, "disguised himself as a woman, in order to go to the theatre at Laval, then went back into his hole."

Suddenly they would rush forth in search of death—exchanging the dungeon for the sepulchre.

Sometimes they raised the cover of their trench, and listened to hear if there were fighting in the distance; they followed the combat with their ears. The firing of the Republicans was regular; the firing of the Royalists, open and dropping: this guided them. If the platoon-firing ceased suddenly, it was a sign that the Royalists were defeated; if the irregular firing continued, and retreated toward the horizon, it was a sign that they had the advantage. The Whites always pursued; the Blues never, because they had the country against them.

These underground belligerents were kept perfectly informed of what was going on. Nothing could be more rapid, nothing more mysterious, than their means of communication. They had cut all the bridges, broken up all the wagons, yet they found means to tell each other everything, to give each other timely warning. Relays of emissaries were established from forest to forest, from village to village,

from farm to farm, from cottage to cottage, from bush to bush. A peasant with a stupid air passed by: he carried dispatches in his hollow stick.

An ancient constituent, Boétidoux, furnished them, to pass from one end of Brittany to the other, with Republican passports according to the new form, with blanks for the names, of which this traitor had bundles. It was impossible to discover these emissaries. Says Puysage: "The secrets confided to more than four hundred thousand individuals were religiously guarded."

It appeared that this quadrilateral, closed on the south by the line of the Sables to Thouars, on the east by the line of Thouars to Saumur and the river of Thoué, on the north by the Loire, and on the west by the ocean, possessed everywhere the same nervous activity, and not a single point of this soil could stir without shaking the whole. In the twinkling of an eye Luçon had information in regard to Noirmoutier, and the camp of La Loué knew what the camp of Croix-Morineau was doing. It seemed as if the very birds of the air carried tidings. The 7th Messidor, year III., Hoche wrote: "One might believe that they have telegraphs."

They were in clans, as in Scotland. Each parish had its captain. In that war my Father fought, and I can speak advisedly thereof.

CHAPTER V.

THEIR LIFE IN WARFARE.

MANY of them were only armed with pikes. Good fowling-pieces were abundant. No marksmen could be more ex-

pert than the poachers of the Bocage and the smugglers of the Loroux. They were strange combatants—terrible and intrepid. The decree for the levy of three hundred thousand men had been the signal for the tocsin to sound in six hundred villages. The blaze of the conflagration burst forth in all quarters at the same time. Poitou and Anjou exploded on one day. Let us add that a premonitory rumbling had made itself heard on the moor of Kerbader upon the 8th of July, 1792, a month before the 10th of August. Alain Redeler, to-day forgotten, was the precursor of La Rochejacquelein and Jean Chouan. The Royalists forced all able-bodied men to march under pain of death. They requisitioned harnesses, carts, and provisions. At once Sapinaud had three thousand soldiers, Cathelineau ten thousand, Stofflet twenty thousand, and Charette was master of Noirmoutier. The Viscount de Scepeaux roused the Haut Anjou; the Chevalier de Dienzie, l'entre Vilaine et Loire; Tristan l'Hermit, the Bas-Maine; the barber Gaston, the city of Guemenée; and Abbé Bernier all the rest. It needed but little to rouse all those multitudes. In the altar of a sworn priest—a “priest swearer,” as the people said—was placed a great black cat, which sprang suddenly out during mass. “It is the devil!” cried the peasants, and a whole canton rose in revolt. A breath of fire issued from the confessionals. In order to attack the Blues and to leap the ravines, they had their poles fifteen feet in length, called *ferte*, an arm available for combat and for flight. In the thickest of the frays, when the peasants were attacking the Republican squares, if they chanced to meet upon the battlefield a cross or a chapel, all fell upon their knees and said a prayer under the enemy's fire; the rosary counted, such as were still liv-

ing sprang up again and rushed upon the foe. Alas, what giants! They loaded their guns as they ran; that was their peculiar talent. They were made to believe whatever their leaders chose. The priests showed them other priests whose necks had been reddened by means of a cord, and said to them, “These are the guillotined who have been brought back to life.” They had their spasms of chivalry: they honored Fesque, a Republican standar-bearer, who allowed himself to be sabred without losing hold of his flag. The peasants had a vein of mockery: they called the Republican and married priests “*Des sans-calottes devenus sans-culottes*” (“*The un-petticoated become the unbreeched*”).

They began by being afraid of the cannon, then they dashed forward with their sticks and took them. They captured first a fine bronze cannon, which they baptized “The Missionary;” then another which dated from the Roman Catholic wars, upon which were engraved the arms of Richelieu and a head of the Virgin; this they named “Marie Jeanne.” When they lost Fontenay they lost Marie Jeanne, about which six hundred peasants fell without flinching; then they retook Fontenay in order to recover Marie Jeanne: they brought it back beneath a *fleur-de-lis* embroidered banner, and covered with flowers, and forced the women who passed to kiss it. But two cannons were a small store. Stofflet had taken Marie Jeanne; Cathelineau, jealous of his success, started out of Pin-en-Mange, assaulted Jallais, and captured a third. Forest attacked Saint-Florent and took a fourth. Two other captains, Choupee and Saint Pol, did better; they simulated cannons by the trunks of trees, gunners by mannikins, and with this artillery, about which they laughed heartily, made

the Blues retreat to Mareuil. This was their great era. Later, when Chalbos routed La Massonière, the peasants left behind them on the dishonored field of battle thirty-two cannon bearing the arms of England. England at that time paid the French princes, and, as Nantial wrote on the 10th of May, 1794, "sent funds to Monseigneur, because Pitt had been told that it was proper so to do."

Mellinel, in a report of the 31st of March, said, "'Long live the English,' is the cry of the rebels!"* The peasants delayed themselves by pillage. These devotees were robbers. Savages have their vices. It is by these that civilization captures them later. Puyssage says, vol. ii., page 187: "I several times preserved the burg of Phélan from pillage." And further on, page 434, he recounts how he avoided entering Montfort: "I made a circuit in order to prevent the plundering of the Jacobins' houses."

They robbed Cholet; they sacked Châlons. After having failed at Granville, they pillaged Ville-Dieu. They styled the "Jacobin herd" those of the country people who had joined the Blues, and exterminated such with more ferocity than other foes. They loved battle like soldiers, and massacre like brigands. To shoot the "clumsy fellows"—that is, the bourgeois—pleased them: they called that "breaking Lent." At Fontenay, one of their priests, the Curé Barbotin, struck down an old man by a sabre stroke. At Saint-Germain-sur-Ille, one of their captains, a nobleman, shot the solicitor of the commune and took his watch. At Machecoul, for five weeks they shot Republicans at the rate of thirty a day, setting them in a row, which was called "the rosary." Back of the line was a

trench, into which some of the victims fell alive; they were buried all the same. We have seen a revival of such actions. Joubert, the president of the district, had his hands sawed off. They put sharp handcuffs, forged expressly, on the Blues whom they made prisoners. They massacred them in the public places, uttering fierce war whoops.

Charette, who signed "Fraternity, the Chevalier Charette," and who wore for headcovering a handkerchief knotted about his brows, after Marat's fashion, burned the city of Pornic, and the inhabitants in their houses. During that time Carrier was horrible. Terror replied to terror. The Breton insurgent had almost the appearance of a Greek rebel, with his short jacket, his gun slung over his shoulder, his leggings, and large breeches similar to the capote. The peasant lad resembled the Sciote.

Henri de la Rochejacquelein, at the age of one-and-twenty, set out for this war armed with a stick and a pair of pistols. The Vendean army counted a hundred and fifty-four divisions. They undertook regular sieges; they held Bressuire invested for three days. One Good Friday ten thousand peasants cannonaded the town of the Sables with red-hot balls. They succeeded in a single day in destroying fourteen Republican cantons, from Montigné to Courbevilles. On the high wall of Thouars this dialogue was heard between La Rochejacquelein and a peasant lad as they stood below:

"Charles!"

"Here I am."

"Stand so that I can mount on your shoulders."

"Jump up."

"Your gun."

"Take it."

And Rochejacquelein leaped into the

* Puyssage, vol. ii., p. 35.

town, and the towers which Duguesclin had besieged were taken without the aid of ladders. They preferred a cartridge to a gold louis. They wept when they lost sight of their village belfry. To run away seemed perfectly natural to them; at such times the leaders would cry, "Throw off your sabots, but keep hold of your guns." When munitions were wanting, they counted their rosaries and rushed forth to seize the powder in the caissons of the Republican artillery; later, D'Elbée demanded powder from the English. If they had wounded men among them, at the approach of the enemy they concealed these in the grain-fields or among the ferns, and went back in search of them when the fight was ended. They had no uniforms. Their garments were torn to bits.

Peasants and nobles wrapped themselves in any rags they could find. Roger Mouliniers wore a turban and a pelisse taken from the wardrobe of the theatre of Flèche; the Chevalier de Beauvilliers wore a barrister's gown, and set a woman's bonnet on his head over a woolen cap. All wore the white belt and a scarf; different grades were marked by the knots. Stofflet had a red knot; La Rochejacquelein had a black knot; Wimpfen, who was half a Girondist, and who for that matter never left Normandy, wore the leather jacket of the Carabots of Caen. They had women in their ranks: Madame de Lescure, who became Madame de la Rochejacquelein; Thérèse de Mollien, the mistress of La Rouarie—she who burned the list of the chiefs of the parishes; Madame de la Rochefoucauld—beautiful, young—who, sabre in hand, rallied the peasants to the foot of the great tower of the castle of Puy Rousseau; and that Antoinette Adams, styled the Chevalier Adams, who was so brave that when captured she

was shot standing out of respect for her courage.

This epic period was a cruel one. Men were mad. Madame de Lescure made her horse tread upon the Republicans stretched on the ground; they were dead, she averred; they were only wounded, perhaps. Sometimes the men proved traitors; the women, never. Mademoiselle Fleury, of the Théâtre Français, went from La Rouarie to Marat, but it was for love. The captains were often as ignorant as the soldiers. Monsieur de Sapinaud could not spell; he was at fault in regard to the orthography of the commonest word. There was enmity among the leaders. The captains of the Marais cried—"Down with those of the High County!" Their cavalry was not numerous and difficult to form. Puyssage writes: "Many a man who would cheerfully give me his two sons grows lukewarm if I ask for one of his horses." Poles, pitchforks, reaping-hooks, guns (old and new), poachers' knives, spits, cudgels bound and studded with iron, these were their arms; some of them carried crosses made of dead men's bones.

They rushed to an attack with loud cries, springing up suddenly from every quarter, from the woods, the hills, the bushes, the hollows of the roads, killing, exterminating, destroying, then were gone. When they marched through a Republican town they cut down the liberty pole, set it on fire, and danced in circles about it as it burned. All their habits were nocturnal. The Vendean rule was, always to appear unexpectedly. They would march fifteen leagues in silence, not so much as stirring a blade of grass as they went. When evening came, after the chiefs had settled what Republican posts should be surprised on the morrow, the men loaded their guns, mumbled their prayers, pulled off their sabots, and filed

in long columns through the woods, marching barefoot across the heath and moss, without a sound, without a word, without an audible breath. It was like the march of wild cats through the darkness.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE.

THE Vendée in insurrection did not number less than five hundred thousand, counting men, women, and children. A half-million of combatants is the sum total given by Tuffin de la Rouarie.

The Federalists helped them; the Vendée had the Gironde for accomplice. La Lozère sent thirty thousand men into the Bocage. Eight departments coalesced: five in Brittany, three in Normandy. Evreux, which fraternized with Caen, was represented in the rebellion by Chaumont, its mayor, and Gardembas, a man of note. Buzot, Gorsos, and Barbaroux, at Caen; Brissot, at Moulins; Chassau, at Lyons; Babant-Saint-Étienne, at Nismes; Môillen and Duchêtel, in Brittany: all these mouths blew the furnace.

There were two Vendean armies: the great, which carried on the war of the forests, and the little, which waged the war of the thickets; it is that shade which separates Charette from Jean Chouan. The little Vendée was honest, the great corrupt; the little was much better. Charette was made a Marquis, Lieutenant-General of the king's armies, and received the great cross of Saint Louis; Jean Chouan remained Jean Chouan. Charette borders on the bandit; Jean Chouan resembled a paladin.

As to the magnanimous chiefs—Bonchamp, Lescure, La Rochejacquelein—they deceived themselves. The grand Catholic Army was an insane attempt; disaster could not fail to follow it. Let any one imagine a tempest of peasants attacking Paris, a coalition of villages besieging the Pantheon, a troop of herdsmen flinging themselves upon a host governed by the light of intellect. Le Mans and Savenay chastised this madness. It was impossible for the Vendée to cross the Loire. She could do everything except that leap. Civil war does not conquer. To pass the Rhine establishes a Caesar and strengthens a Napoleon; to cross the Loire killed La Rochejacquelein. The real strength of Vendée was Vendée at home; there she was invulnerable, unconquerable. The Vendean at home was smuggler, laborer, soldier, shepherd, poacher, sharpshooter, goatherd, bell-ringer, peasant, spy, assassin, sacristan, wild beast of the wood.

La Rochejacquelein is only Achilles; Jean Chouan is Proteus.

The rebellion of the Vendée failed. Other revolts have succeeded: that of Switzerland, for example. There is this difference between the mountain insurgent like the Swiss and the forest insurgent like the Vendean, that almost always the one fights for an ideal, the other for a prejudice. The one soars, the other crawls. The one combats for humanity, the other for solitude. The one desires liberty, the other wishes isolation. The one defends the commune, the other the parish. "Commons! Commons!" cried the heroes of Marat. The one has to deal with precipices, the other with quagmires; the one is the man of torrents and foaming streams, the other of stagnant puddles, where pestilence lurks; the one has his head in the blue sky, the other in the

thicket; the one is on a summit, the other in a shadow.

The education of heights and shallows is very different. The mountain is a citadel; the forest is an ambushade: the one inspires audacity, the other teaches trickery. Antiquity placed the gods on heights and the satyrs in copses. The satyr is the savage, half-man, half-brute. Free countries have Apennines, Alps, Pyrenees, an Olympus. Parnassus is a mountain. Mont Blanc is the colossal auxiliary of William Tell. Below and above those immense struggles of souls against the night which fills the poems of India, the Himalayas may be seen. Greece, Spain, Italy, Helvetia have for force the mountain; Cimmeria be it—Germany or Brittany has the wood. The forest is barbarous.

The configuration of soil decides many of man's actions. The earth is more his accomplice than people believe. In presence of certain savage landscapes one is tempted to exonerate man and criminate creation; one feels a certain hidden provocation on the part of nature; the desert is sometimes unhealthy for the conscience, especially for the conscience that is little illuminated; conscience may be a giant—then she produces a Socrates, a Christ; she may be a dwarf—then she moulds Atreus and Judas. The narrow conscience becomes quickly reptile in its instincts; forests where twilight reigns, the bushes, the thorns, the marshes beneath the branches, all have a fatal attraction for her; she undergoes the mysterious infiltration of evil persuasions. Optical illusions, unexplained mirages, the terrors of the hour or the scene, throw man into this sort of fright, half-religious, half-bestial, which engenders superstition in ordinary times, and brutality at violent epochs. Hallucinations hold the torch

which lights the road to murder. The brigand is dizzied by a vertigo. Nature in her immensity has a double meaning, which dazzles great minds and blinds savage souls. When man is ignorant, when his desert is peopled with visions, the obscurity of solitude adds itself to the obscurity of intelligence; hence come depths in the human soul black and profound as an abyss. Certain rocks, certain ravines, certain thickets, certain wild openings in the trees through which night looks down, push men on to mad and atrocious actions. One might almost say that there are places which are the home of the spirit of evil.

How many tragic sights have been watched by the sombre hill between Baignon and Plélan!

Vast horizons lead the soul on to wide, general ideas; circumscribed horizons engender narrow, one-sided conceptions, which condemn great hearts to be little in point of soul. Jean Chouan was an example of this truth. Broad ideas are hated by partial ideas; this is in fact the struggle of progress.

Neighborhood—Country. These two words sum up the whole of the Vendean war: a quarrel of the local idea against the universal; of the peasant against the patriot.

CHAPTER VII.

BRITTANY THE REBEL.

BRITTANY is an ancient rebel. Each time she revolted during two thousand years she was in the right; but the last time she was wrong. Still at bottom—against the revolution as against mon-

archy, against the acting representatives as against governing dukes and peers, against the rule of assignats as against the sway of excise officers; whosoever might be the men that fought, Nicolas Rapin, François de la None, Captain Pluviant, and the Lady of La Garnache, Stofflet, Coquereau, and Lechandelier de Pierreville; under De Rohan against the king and under La Rochejacquelein for the king—it was always the same war that Brittany waged—the war of the Local spirit against the Central.

Those ancient provinces were ponds; that stagnant water could not bear to flow; the wind which swept across did not revivify—it irritated them.

Finisterre formed the bounds of France: there the space given to man ended, and the march of generations stopped. "Halt!" the ocean cried to the land, to barbarism and to civilization. Each time that the centre—Paris—gives an impulse, whether that impulse come from royalty or republicanism, whether it be in the interest of despotism or liberty, it is something New, and Brittany bristles up against it. "Leave us in peace! What is it they want of us?" The Marais seizes the pitchfork, the Bocage its carbine. All our attempts, our initiative movement in legislation and in education, our encyclopedias, our philosophies, our genius, our glories, all fail before the Houroux; the tocsin of Bazouges menaces the French Revolution, the moor of Faon rises in rebellion against the voice of our towns, and the bell of the Haut-des-Pères

declares war against the Tower of the Louvre.

Terrible blindness!

The Vendean insurrection was the result of a fatal misunderstanding.

A colossal scuffle, a jangling of Titans, an immeasurable rebellion, destined to leave in history only one word—the Vendée—word illustrious yet dark; committing suicide for the absent, devoted to egotism, passing its time in making to cowardice the offer of a boundless bravery; without calculation, without strategy, without tactics, without plan, without aim, without chief, without responsibility; showing to what extent Will can be impotent; chivalric and savage; absurdity at its climax, a building up a barrier of black shadows against the light; ignorance making a long resistance at once idiotic and superb against justice, right, reason, and deliverance; the terror of eight years, the rendering desolate fourteen departments, the devastation of fields, the destruction of harvests, the burning of villages, the ruin of cities, the pillage of houses, the massacre of women and children, the torch in the thatch, the sword in the heart, the terror of civilization, the hope of Mr. Pitt: such was this war, the unreasoning effort of the parricide.

In short, by proving the necessity of perforating in every direction the old Breton shadows, and piercing this thicket with arrows of light from every quarter at once, the Vendée served Progress. The catastrophes had their uses.

PART THE THIRD.

IN VENDÉE.

BOOK THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

PLUSQUAM CIVILIA BELLA.

THE summer of 1792 had been very rainy; the summer of 1793 was dry and hot. In consequence of the civil war, there were no roads left, so to speak, in Brittany. Still it was possible to get about, thanks to the beauty of the season. Dry fields make an easy route.

At the close of a lovely July day, about an hour before sunset, a man on horse-back, who came from the direction of Avranches, drew rein before the little inn called the Croix-Brancard, which stood at the entrance of Pontorsin, and which for years past had borne this inscription on its sign—"Good cider sold here." It had been warm all day, but the wind was beginning now to rise.

The traveler was enveloped in an ample cloak which covered the back of his horse. He wore a broad hat with a tricolored cockade, which was a sufficiently bold thing to do in this country of hedges and gunshots, where a cockade was a target. The cloak, fastened about his neck, was thrown back to leave his arms free, and beneath glimpses could be had of a tri-

colored sash and two pistols thrust in it. A sabre hung down below the cloak. At the sound of the horse's hoofs the door of the inn opened and the landlord appeared, a lantern in his hand. It was the intermediate hour between day and night; still light along the highway, but dark in the house. The host looked at the cockade. "Citizen," said he, "do you stop here?"

"No."

"Where are you going, then?"

"To Dol."

"In that case go back to Avranches or remain at Pontorsin."

"Why?"

"Because there is fighting at Dol."

"Ah!" said the horseman.

Then he added: "Give my horse some oats."

The host brought the trough, emptied a measure of oats into it, and took the bridle off the horse, which began to snuff and eat.

The dialogue continued:

"Citizen, is that a horse of requisition?"

"No."

"It belongs to you?"

"Yes. I bought and paid for it."

"Where do you come from?"

"Paris."

"Not direct?"

"No."

"I should think not! The roads are closed. But the post runs still."

"As far as Alençon. I left it there."

"Ah! Very soon there will be no longer any posts in France. There are no more horses. A horse worth three hundred livres costs six hundred, and fodder is beyond all price. I have been postmaster, and now I am keeper of a cookshop. Out of thirteen hundred and thirteen postmasters that there used to be, two hundred have resigned. Citizen, you traveled according to the new tariff?"

"That of the first of May—yes."

"Twenty sous a post for a carriage, twelve for a gig, five sous for a van. You bought your horse at Alençon?"

"Yes."

"You have ridden all day?"

"Since dawn."

"And yesterday?"

"And the day before."

"I can see that. You came by Domfront and Mortain."

"And Avranches."

"Take my advice, citizen; rest yourself. You must be tired. Your horse is certainly."

"Horses have a right to be tired; men have not."

The host again fixed his eyes on the traveler. It was a grave, calm, severe face, framed by gray hair.

The innkeeper cast a glance along the road, which was deserted as far as the eye could reach, and said—"And you travel alone in this fashion?"

"I have an escort."

"Where is it?"

"My sabre and pistols."

The innkeeper brought a bucket of water, and, while the horse was drinking, studied the traveler, and said mentally—

"All the same, he has the look of a priest."

The horseman resumed: "You say there is fighting at Dol?"

"Yes. That ought to be about beginning."

"Who is fighting?"

"One *ci-devant* against another *ci-devant*."

"You said—"

"I say that an ex-noble who is for the Republic is fighting against another ex-noble who is for the King."

"But there is no longer a king."

"There is the little fellow! The odd part of the business is that these two *ci-devants* are relations."

The horseman listened attentively. The innkeeper continued: "One is young, the other old. It is the grand-nephew who fights the great-uncle. The uncle is a Royalist, the nephew a patriot. The uncle commands the Whites, the nephew commands the Blues. Ah, they will show no quarter, I'll warrant you. It is a war to the death."

"Death?"

"Yes, citizen. Hold! would you like to see the compliments they fling at each other's heads? Here is a notice the old man finds means to placard everywhere, on all the houses and all the trees, and that he has had stuck up on my very door."

The host held up his lantern to a square of paper fastened on a panel of the double door, and, as the placard was written in large characters, the traveler could read it as he sat on his horse:

"The Marquis de Lantenac has the honor of informing his grand-nephew, the Viscount Gauvain, that, if the Marquis has the good fortune to seize his person, he will cause the Viscount to be decently shot."

"Here," added the host, "is the reply."

He went forward, and threw the light of the lantern upon a second placard placed on a level with the first upon

the other leaf of the door. The traveler read :

"Gauvain warns Lantenac that, if he take him, he will have him shot."

"Yesterday," said the host, "the first placard was stuck on my door, and this morning the second. There was no waiting for the answer."

The traveler in a half-voice, and as if speaking to himself, uttered these words, which the innkeeper heard without really comprehending—

"Yes; this is more than war in the country—it is war in families. It is necessary, and it is well. The grand restoration of the people must be bought at this price."

And the traveler raised his hand to his hat and saluted the second placard, on which his eyes were still fixed.

The host continued: "So, citizen, you understand how the matter lies. In the cities and the large towns we are for the Revolution, in the country they are against it; that is to say, in the towns people are Frenchmen, and in the villages they are Bretons. It is a war of the townspeople against the peasants. They call us clowns, we call them boors. The nobles and the priests are with them."

"Not all," interrupted the horseman.

"Certainly not, citizen, since we have here a viscount against a marquis."

Then he added to himself—"And I feel sure I am speaking to a priest."

The horseman continued: "And which of the two has the best of it?"

"The viscount so far. But he has to work hard. The old man is a tough one. They belong to the Gauvain family—nobles of these parts. It is a family with two branches: there is the great branch, whose chief is called the Marquis de Lantenac, and there is the lesser branch, whose head is called the Viscount Gauvain. To-

day the two branches fight each other. One does not see that among trees, but one sees it among men. This Marquis de Lantenac is all-powerful in Brittany; the peasants consider him a prince. The very day he landed, eight thousand men joined him; in a week, three hundred parishes had risen. If he had been able to get foothold on the coast, the English would have landed. Luckily this Gauvain was at hand—the other's grand-nephew—odd chance! He is the Republican commander, and he has checkmated his great-uncle. And then, as good luck would have it, when this Lantenac arrived, and was massacring a heap of prisoners, he had two women shot, one of whom had three children that had been adopted by a Paris battalion. And that made a terrible battalion. They call themselves the Battalion of the Bonnet Rouge. There are not many of those Parisians left, but they are furious bayonets. They have been incorporated into the division of Commandant Gauvain. Nothing can stand against them. They mean to avenge the women and retake the children. Nobody knows what the old man has done with the little ones. That is what enraged the Parisian grenadiers. Suppose those babies had not been mixed up in the matter—the war would not be what it is. The viscount is a good, brave young man; but the old fellow is a terrible marquis. The peasants call it the war of Saint Michael against Beelzebub. You know, perhaps, that Saint Michael is an angel of the district. There is a mountain named after him out in the bay. They say he overcame the demon, and buried him under another mountain near here, which is called Tombelaine."

"Yes," murmured the horseman; "Tumba Beleni, the tomb of Belenus—Bel, Belial, Beelzebub."

"I see that you are well informed."

And the host again spoke to himself—"He understands Latin! Decidedly he is a priest."

Then he resumed: "Well, citizen, for the peasants it is that war beginning over again. For them the Royalist general is Saint Michael, and Beelzebub is the Republican commander. But if there is a devil, it is certainly Lantenac, and if there is an angel, it is Gauvain. You will take nothing, citizen?"

"I have my gourd and a bit of bread. But you do not tell me what is passing at Dol!"

"This. Gauvain commands the exploring column of the coast. Lantenac's aim was to rouse a general insurrection, and sustain Lower Brittany by the aid of Lower Normandy, open the door to Pitt, and give a shove forward to the Vendean army, with twenty thousand English and two hundred thousand peasants. Gauvain cut this plan short. He holds the coast, and he drives Lantenac into the interior and the English into the sea. Lantenac was here, and Gauvain has dislodged him; has taken from him the Pont-au-Beau, has driven him out of Avranches, chased him out of Villedieu, and kept him from reaching Granville. He is manœuvring to shut him up again in the forest of Fougères, and to surround him. Yesterday everything was going well; Gauvain was here with his division. All of a sudden—look sharp!—the old man, who is skillful, made a point; information comes that he has marched on Dol. If he take Dol, and establishes a battery on Mount Dol (for he has cannon), then there will be a place on the coast where the English can land, and everything is lost. That is why, as there was not a minute to lose, that Gauvain, who is a man with a head, took counsel with no-

body but himself, asked no orders and waited for none, but sounded the signal to saddle, put to his artillery, collected his troop, drew his sabre, and, while Lantenac throws himself on Dol, Gauvain throws himself on Lantenac. It is at Dol that these two Breton heads will knock together. There will be a fine shock. They are at it now."

"How long does it take to get to Dol?"

"At least three hours for a troop with cannon; but they are there now."

The traveler listened, and said, "In fact, I think I hear cannon."

The host listened. "Yes, citizen; and the musketry. They have opened the ball. You would do well to pass the night here. There will be nothing good to catch over there."

"I cannot stop. I must keep on my road."

"You are wrong. I do not know your business; but the risk is great, and unless it concern what you hold dearest in the world—"

"In truth, it is that which is concerned," said the cavalier.

"Something like your son—"

"Very nearly that," said the cavalier.

The innkeeper raised his head, and said to himself—"Still this citizen gives me the impression of being a priest." Then, after a little reflection—"All the same, a priest may have children."

"Put the bridle back on my horse," said the traveler. "How much do I owe you?"

He paid the man.

The host set the trough and the bucket back against the wall and returned toward the horseman.

"Since you are determined to go, listen to my advice. It is clear that you are going to Saint-Malo. Well, do not pass

by Dol. There are two roads; the road by Dol, and the road along the sea-shore. There is scarcely any difference in their length. The sea-shore road passes by Saint-Georges-de-Brehaigne, Cherrueix, and Hirèl-le-Vivier. You leave Dol to the south and Cancale to the north. Citizen, at the end of the street you will find the branching off of the two routes; that of Dol is on the left, that of Saint-Georges-de-Brehaigne on the right. Listen well to me; if you go by Dol, you will fall into the middle of the massacre. That is why you must not take to the left, but to the right."

"Thanks," said the traveler.

He spurred his horse forward. The obscurity was now complete; he hurried on into the night. The innkeeper lost sight of him.

When the traveler reached the end of the street where the two roads branched off, he heard the voice of the innkeeper calling to him from afar—"Take the right!"

He took the left.

CHAPTER II.

DOL.

DOL, a Spanish city of France in Brittany, as the guide-books style it, is not a town—it is a street. A great old Gothic street, bordered all the way on the right and the left by houses with pillars, placed irregularly, so that they form nooks and elbows in the highway, which is nevertheless very wide. The rest of the town is only a network of lanes, attaching themselves to this great diametrical street, and

pouring into it like brooks into a river. The city, without gates or walls, open, overlooked by Mount Dol, could not have sustained a siege, but the street might have sustained one. The promontories of houses, which were still to be seen fifty years back, and the two pillared galleries which bordered the street, made a battleground that was very strong and capable of offering great resistance. Each house was a fortress in fact, and it would be necessary to take them one after another. The old market was very nearly in the middle of the street.

The innkeeper of the Croix-Brancard had spoken truly—a mad conflict filled Dol at the moment he uttered the words. A nocturnal duel between the Whites, that morning arrived, and the Blues, who had come upon them in the evening, burst suddenly over the town. The forces were unequal; the Whites numbered six thousand—there were only fifteen hundred of the Blues; but there was equality in point of obstinate rage. Strange to say, it was the fifteen hundred who had attacked the six thousand.

On one side a mob, on the other a phalanx. On one side six thousand peasants, with blessed medals on their leather vests, white ribbons on their round hats, Christian devices on their braces, chaplets at their belts, carrying more pitchforks than sabres, carbines without bayonets, dragging cannon with ropes; badly equipped, ill disciplined, poorly armed, but frantic. In opposition to them were fifteen hundred soldiers, wearing three-cornered hats, coats with large tails and wide lapels, shoulder-belts crossed, copper-hilted swords, and carrying guns with long bayonets. They were trained, skilled; docile, yet fierce; obeying like men who would know how to command. Volunteers also, shoeless and in rags too, but

volunteers for their country. On the side of Monarchy, peasants who were paladins; for the Revolution, barefooted heroes, and each troop possessing a soul in its leader; the Royalists having an old man, the Republicans a young one. On this side, Lantenac; on the other, Gauvain.

The Revolution, side by side with its faces of youthful giants like those of Danton, Saint-Just, and Robespierre, has faces of ideal youth, like those of Hoche and Marceau. Gauvain was one of these. He was thirty years old; he had a Herculean bust, the solemn eye of a prophet, and the laugh of a child. He did not smoke, he did not drink, he did not swear. He carried a dressing-case through the whole war; he took care of his nails, his teeth, and his hair, which was dark and luxuriant. During halts he himself shook in the wind his military coat, riddled with bullets and white with dust. Though always rushing headlong into an affray, he had never been wounded. His singularly sweet voice had at command the harsh imperiousness needed by a leader. He set the example of sleeping on the ground, in the wind, the rain, and the snow, rolled in his cloak and with his noble head pillowed on a stone. His was a heroic and innocent soul. The sabre in his hand transfigured him. He had that effeminate air which in battle turns into something formidable.

With all that, a thinker and a philosopher—a youthful sage. Alcibiades in appearance, Socrates in speech.

In that immense improvisation of the French Revolution this young man had become at once a leader. His division, formed by himself, was like a Roman legion, a kind of complete little army; it was composed of infantry and cavalry; it had its scouts, its pioneers, its sappers, pontoons; and as a Roman legion had

its catapults, this one had its cannon. Three pieces, well mounted, rendered the column strong, while leaving it easy to guide.

Lantenac was also a thorough soldier—a more consummate one. He was at the same time wary and hardy. Old heroes have more cold determination than young ones, because they are far removed from the warmth of life's morning; more audacity, because they are near death. What have they to lose? So very little. Hence the manoeuvres of Lantenac were at once rash and skillful. But in the main, and almost always, in this dogged hand-to-hand conflict between the old man and the young, Gauvain gained the advantage. It was rather the work of fortune than anything else. All good luck—even successes which are in themselves terrible—go to youth. Victory is feminine. Lantenac was exasperated against Gauvain; justly, because Gauvain fought against him; in the second place, because he was of his kindred. What did he mean by turning Jacobin? This Gauvain! This mischievous dog! His heir—for the marquis had no children—his grand-nephew, almost his grandson. "Ah," said this quasi-grandfather, "If I put my hand on him, I will kill him like a dog!"

For that matter, the Revolution was right to disquiet itself in regard to this Marquis de Lantenac. An earthquake followed his landing. His name spread through the Vendean insurrection like a train of powder, and Lantenac at once became the centre. In a revolt of that nature, where each is jealous of the other, and each has his thicket or ravine, the arrival of a superior rallies the scattered leaders who have been equals among themselves. Nearly all the forest captains had joined Lantenac, and, whether near

or far off, they obeyed him. One man alone had departed; it was the first who had joined him—Gavard. Wherefore? Because he had been a man of trust. Gavard had known all the secrets and adopted all the plans of the ancient system of civil war; Lantenac appeared to replace and supplant him. One does not inherit from a man of trust; the shoe of La Ronain did not fit Lantenac. Gavard departed to join Bonchamp.

Lantenac, as a military man, belonged to the school of Frederick II.; he understood combining the great war with the little. He would have neither a "confused mass," like the great Catholic and royal army, a crowd destined to be crushed, nor a troop of guerrillas scattered among the hedges and copses, good to harass, impotent to destroy. Guerrilla warfare finishes nothing, or finishes ill; it begins by attacking a republic and ends by rifling a diligence. Lantenac did not comprehend this Breton war as the other chiefs had done; La Rochejacquelein was all for open country campaigns, Jean Chouan all for the forest; he would have neither Vendée nor Chouannerie; he wanted real warfare; he would make use of the peasant, but he meant to depend on the soldier. He wanted bands for strategy and regiments for tactics. He found these village armies admirable for attack, for ambush and surprise, quickly gathered, quickly dispersed; but he felt that they lacked solidity; they were like water in his hand; he wanted to create a solid base in this floating and diffused war; he wanted to join to the savage army of the forests regularly drilled troops that would make a pivot about which he could manœuvre the peasants. It was a profound and terrible conception; if it had succeeded, the Vendée would have been unconquerable.

But where to find regular troops? Where look for soldiers? Where seek for regiments? Where discover an army ready made? In England. Hence Lantenac's determined idea—to land the English. Thus the conscience of parties compromises with itself. The white cockade hid the red uniform from Lantenac's sight. He had only one thought—to get possession of some point on the coast and deliver it up to Pitt. That was why, seeing Dol defenceless, he flung himself upon it; the taking of the town would give him Mount Dol, and Mount Dol the coast.

The place was well chosen. The cannon of Mount Dol would sweep the Fresnois on one side and Saint-Brelade on the other; would keep the cruisers of Cancale at a distance, and leave the whole beach, from Raz-sur-Couesnon to Saint-Meloire-des-Oudes, clear for an invasion.

For the carrying out of this decisive attempt, Lantenac had brought with him only a little over six thousand men, the flower of the bands which he had at his disposal, and all his artillery—ten sixteen-pound culverins, a demi-culverin, and a four-pounder. His idea was to establish a strong battery on Mount Dol, upon the principle that a thousand shots fired from ten cannon do more execution than fifteen hundred fired with five. Success appeared certain. They were six thousand men. Toward Avranches, they had only Gauvain and his fifteen hundred men to fear, and Lechelle in the direction of Dinan. It was true that Lechelle had twenty-five thousand men, but he was twenty leagues away. So Lantenac felt confidence; on Lechelle's side he put the great distance against the great numbers; with Gauvain, the size of the force against their propinquity. Let us add that Lechelle was an idiot, who later on allowed his twenty-five thousand men to be exterminated in the

landes of the Croix-Bataille, a blunder which he atoned for by suicide.

So Lantenac felt perfect security. His entrance into Dol was sudden and stern. The Marquis de Lantenac had a stern reputation ; he was known to be without pity. No resistance was attempted. The terrified inhabitants barricaded themselves in their houses. The six thousand Vendéans installed themselves in the town with rustic confusion ; it was almost like a fair-ground, without quartermasters, without allotted camp, bivouacking at hazard, cooking in the open air, scattering themselves among the churches, forsaking their guns for their rosaries. Lantenac went in haste with some artillery officers to reconnoitre Mount Dol, leaving the command to Gouge-le-Bruant, whom he had appointed field-sergeant.

This Gouge-le-Bruant has left a vague trace in history. He had two nicknames, *Brise-bleu*, on account of his massacre of patriots, and *Imânus*, because he had in him a something that was indescribably horrible. *Imânus*, derived from *imanis*, is an old bas-Norman word which expresses superhuman ugliness, something almost divine in its awfulness—a demon, a satyr, an ogre. An ancient manuscript says—"With my two eyes I saw Imânus." The old people of the Bocage no longer know to-day who Gouge-le-Bruant was, nor what Brise-blue signifies ; but they know, confusedly, Imânus ; Imânus is mingled with the local superstitions. They talk of him still at Trémoré and at Plumaugat, two villages where Gouge-le-Bruant has left the trace of his sinister course. In the Vendée the others were savages ; Gouge-le-Bruant was the barbarian. He was a species of Cacique, tattooed with Christian crosses and *fleur-de-lis* ; he had on his face the hideous, almost supernatural glare of a soul which

no other human soul resembled. He was infernally brave in combat ; atrocious afterward. His was a heart full of tortuous intricacies, capable of all forms of devotion, inclined to all madnesses. Did he reason ? Yes ; but as serpents crawl—in a twisted fashion. He started from heroism to reach murder. It was impossible to divine whence his resolves came to him—they were sometimes grand from their very monstrosity. He was capable of every possible unexpected horror. His ferocity was epic.

Hence his mysterious nickname—Imânus.

The Marquis de Lantenac had confidence in his cruelty.

It was true that Imânus excelled in cruelty, but in strategy and in tactics he was less clever, and perhaps the marquis erred in making him his field-sergeant. However that might be, he left Imânus behind him with instructions to replace him and look after everything.

Gouge-le-Brouant, a man more of a fighter than a soldier, was fitter to cut the throats of a clan than to guard a town. Still he posted main-guards.

When evening came, as the Marquis de Lantenac was returning toward Dol, after having decided upon the ground for his battery, he suddenly heard the report of cannon. He looked forward. A red smoke was rising from the principal street. There had been surprise, invasion, assault ; they were fighting in the town.

Although very difficult to astonish, he was stupefied. He had not been prepared for anything of the sort. Who could it be ? Evidently it was not Gauvain. No man would attack a force that numbered four to his one. Was it Lechelle ? But could he have made such a forced march ? Lechelle was improbable ; Gauvain, impossible.

Lantenac urged on his horse; as he rode forward he encountered the flying inhabitants; he questioned them; they were mad with terror; they cried—"The Blues! the Blues!" When he arrived, the situation was a bad one.

This is what had happened.

CHAPTER. III.

SMALL ARMIES AND GREAT BATTLES.

As we have just seen, the peasants, on arriving at Dol, dispersed themselves through the town, each man following his own fancy, as happens when troops "obey from friendship"—a favorite expression with the Vendéans—a species of obedience which makes heroes, but not troopers. They thrust the artillery out of the way along with the baggage, under the arches of the old market-hall. They were weary; they ate, drank, counted their rosaries, and lay down pell-mell across the principal street, which was encumbered rather than guarded.

As night came on, the greater portion fell asleep, with their heads on their knapsacks, some having their wives beside them, for the peasant women often followed their husbands, and the robust ones acted as spies. It was a mild July evening; the constellations glittered in the deep purple of the sky. The entire bivouac, which resembled rather the halt of a caravan than an army encamped, gave itself up to repose. Suddenly, amid the dull gleams of twilight, such as had not yet closed their eyes saw three pieces of ordnance pointed at the entrance of the street.

It was Gauvain's artillery. He had surprised the main guard. He was in the town, and his column held the top of the street.

A peasant started up, cried, "Who goes there?" and fired his musket; a cannon-shot replied. Then a furious discharge of musketry burst forth. The whole drowsy crowd sprang up with a start. A rude shock, to fall asleep under the stars and wake under a volley of grape-shot. The first moments were terrific. There is nothing so tragic as the aimless swarming of a thunderstricken crowd. They flung themselves on their arms. They yelled, they ran; many fell. The assaulted peasants no longer knew what they were about, and blindly shot each other. The townspeople, stunned with fright, rushed in and out of their houses and wandered frantically amid the hubbub. Families shrieked to one another. A dismal combat, in which women and children were mingled. The balls, as they whistled overhead, streaked the darkness with rays of light. A fusillade poured from every dark corner. There was nothing but smoke and tumult. The entanglement of the baggage-wagons and the cannon-carriages was added to the confusion. The horses became unmanageable. The wounded were trampled under foot. The groans of the poor wretches, helpless on the ground, filled the air. Horror here—stupefaction there. Soldiers and officers sought for one another. In the midst of all this could be seen creatures made indifferent to the awful scene by personal preoccupations. A woman sat nursing her new-born babe, seated on a bit of wall, against which her husband leaned with his leg broken; and he, while his blood was flowing, tranquilly loaded his rifle and fired at random, straight before him into the darkness. Men lying flat on

the ground fired across the spokes of the wagon-wheels. At moments there rose a hideous din of clamors, then the great voices of the cannon drowned all. It was awful.

It was like a felling of trees; they dropped one upon another. Gauvain poured out a deadly fire from his ambush, and suffered little loss.

Still the peasants, courageous amid their disorder, ended by putting themselves on the defensive; they retreated into the market—a vast, obscure redoubt, a forest of stone pillars. There they again made a stand; anything which resembled a wood gave them confidence. Imânus supplied the absence of Lantenac as best he could. They had cannon, but, to the great astonishment of Gauvain, they did not make use of it; that was owing to the fact that the artillery officers had gone with the marquis to reconnoitre Mount Dol, and the peasants did not know how to manage the culverins and demi-culverins; but they riddled with balls the Blues who cannonaded them. They replied to the grape-shot by volleys of musketry. It was now they who were sheltered. They had heaped together the drays, the tumbrils, the casks, all the litter of the old market, and improvised a lofty barricade, with openings through which they could pass their carbines. From these holes their fusillade was murderous. The whole was quickly arranged. In a quarter of an hour the market presented an impregnable front.

This became a serious matter for Gauvain. This market suddenly transformed into a citadel was unexpected. The peasants were inside it, massed and solid. Gauvain's surprise had succeeded, but he ran the risk of defeat. He got down from his saddle. He stood attentively studying the darkness, his arms folded, clutching

his sword in one hand, erect, in the glare of a torch which lighted his battery.

The gleam, falling on his tall figure, made him visible to the men behind the barricade. He became an aim for them, but he did not notice it.

The shower of balls sent out from the barricade fell about him as he stood there, lost in thought.

But he could oppose cannon to all these carbines, and cannon always ends by getting the advantage. Victory rests with him who has the artillery. His battery, well-manned, insured him the superiority.

Suddenly a lightning-flash burst from the shadowy market; there was a sound like a peal of thunder, and a ball broke through a house above Gauvain's head. The barricade was replying to the cannon with its own voice. What had happened? Something new had occurred. The artillery was no longer confined to one side.

A second ball followed the first and buried itself in the wall close to Gauvain. A third knocked his hat off on the ground.

These balls were of a heavy calibre. It was a sixteen-pounder that fired.

"They are aiming at you, commandant," cried the artillerymen.

They extinguished the torch. Gauvain, as if in a reverie, picked up his hat.

Some one had in fact aimed at Gauvain—it was Lantenac. The marquis had just arrived within the barricade from the opposite side.

Imânus had hurried to meet him.

"Monseigneur, we are surprised."

"By whom?"

"I do not know."

"Is the route to Dinan free?"

"I think so."

"We must begin a retreat."

"It has commenced. A good many have run away."

"We must not run; we must fall back. Why are you not making use of this artillery?"

"The men lost their heads; besides, the officers were not here."

"I am come."

"Monseigneur, I have sent toward Fougères all I could of the baggage, the women, everything useless. What is to be done with the three little prisoners?"

"Ah, those children!"

"Yes."

"They are our hostages. Have them taken to La Tourgue."

This said, the marquis rushed to the barricade. With the arrival of the chief the whole face of affairs changed. The barricade was ill-constructed for artillery; there was only room for two cannon; the marquis put in position a couple of sixteen-pounders, for which loopholes were made. As he leaned over one of the guns, watching the enemy's battery through the opening, he perceived Gauvain.

"It is he!" cried the marquis.

Then he took the swab and rammer himself, loaded the piece, sighted it, and fired.

Thrice he aimed at Gauvain and missed. The third time he only succeeded in knocking his hat off.

"Numbskull!" muttered Lantenac: "a little lower, and I should have taken his head."

Suddenly the torch went out, and he had only darkness before him.

"So be it," said he.

Then turning toward the peasant gunners, he cried, "Now let them have it."

Gauvain, on his side, was not less in earnest. The seriousness of the situation increased. A new phase of the combat developed itself. The barricade had begun to use cannon. Who could tell if it were not about to pass from the defensive to

the offensive? He had before him, after deducting the killed and fugitives, at least five thousand combatants, and he had left only twelve hundred serviceable men. What would happen to the Republicans if the enemy perceived their paucity of numbers? The rôles were reversed. He had been the assailant—he would become the assailed. If the barricade were to make a sortie, everything might be lost.

What was to be done? He could no longer think of attacking the barricade in front; an attempt at main force would be foolhardy; twelve hundred men cannot dislodge five thousand. To rush upon them was impossible; to wait would be fatal. He must make an end. But how?

Gauvain belonged to the neighborhood; he was acquainted with the town; he knew that the old market-house where the Vendéans were intrenched was backed by a labyrinth of narrow and crooked streets.

He turned toward his lieutenant, who was that valiant Captain Guéchamp, afterward famous for clearing out the forest of Concise, where Jean Chouan was born, and for preventing the capture of Bourgneuf by holding the dike of La Chaîne against the rebels.

"Guéchamp," said he, "I leave you in command. Fire as fast as you can. Riddle the barricade with cannon-balls. Keep all those fellows over yonder busy."

"I understand," said Guéchamp.

"Mass the whole column with their guns loaded, and hold them ready to make an onslaught."

He added a few words in Guéchamp's ear.

"I hear," said Guéchamp.

Gauvain resumed: "Are all our drummers on foot?"

"Yes."

"We have nine. Keep two, and give me seven."

The seven drummers ranged themselves in silence in front of Gauvain.

Then he said—"Battalion of the Bonnet Rouge!"

Twelve men, of whom one was a sergeant, stepped out from the main body of the troop.

"I demand the whole battalion," said Gauvain.

"Here it is," replied the sergeant.

"You are twelve!"

"There are twelve of us left."

"It is well," said Gauvain.

This sergeant was the good, rude trooper Radoub, who had adopted, in the name of the battalion, the three children they had encountered in the wood of La Saudraie.

It will be remembered that only a demi-battalion had been exterminated at Herben-Pail, and Radoub was fortunate enough not to have been among the number.

There was a forage-wagon standing near; Gauvain pointed toward it with his finger.

"Sergeant, order your men to make some straw ropes and twist them about their guns, so that there will be no noise if they knock together."

A minute passed; the order was silently executed in the darkness.

"It is done," said the sergeant.

"Soldiers, take off your shoes," commanded Gauvain.

"We have none," returned the sergeant.

They numbered, counting the drummers, nineteen men; Gauvain made the twentieth.

He cried: "Follow me! Single file! The drummers next to me—the battalion behind them. Sergeant, you will command the battalion."

He put himself at the head of the column, and while the firing on both sides continued, these twenty men, gliding

along like shadows, plunged into the deserted lanes. The line marched thus for some time, twisting along the fronts of the houses. The whole town seemed dead; the citizens were hidden in their cellars. Every door was barred; every shutter closed. No light to be seen anywhere.

Amid this silence the principal street kept up its din; the cannonading continued; the Republican battery and the Royalist barricade spit forth their volleys with undiminished fury.

After twenty minutes of this tortuous march, Gauvain, who kept his way unerringly through the darkness, reached the end of a lane which led into the broad street, but on the other side of the market-house.

The position was altered. In this direction there was no intrenchment, according to the eternal imprudence of barricade builders; the market was open and the entrance free among the pillars where some baggage-wagons stood ready to depart. Gauvain and his nineteen men had the five thousand Vendéans before them, but their backs instead of their faces.

Gauvain spoke in a low voice to the sergeant; the soldiers untwisted the straw from their guns; the twelve grenadiers posted themselves in line behind the angle of the lane, and the seven drummers waited with their drumsticks lifted. The artillery firing was intermittent. Suddenly, in a pause between the discharges, Gauvain waved his sword, and cried, in a voice which rang like a trumpet through the silence: "Two hundred men to the right—two hundred men to the left—all the rest in the centre!"

The twelve muskets fired, and the seven drums beat.

Gauvain uttered the formidable battle-cry of the Blues—"To your bayonets! Down upon them!"

The effect was prodigious.

This whole peasant mass felt itself surprised in the rear, and believed that it had a fresh army at its back. At the same instant, on hearing the drums, the column which Guéchamp commanded at the head of the street began to move, sounding the charge in its turn, and flung itself at a run on the barricade. The peasants found themselves between two fires. Panic magnifies: a pistol-shot sounds like the report of a cannon; in moments of terror the imagination heightens every noise; the barking of a dog sounds like the roar of a lion. Add to this the fact that the peasant catches fright as easily as thatch catches fire, and as quickly as a blazing thatch becomes a conflagration, a panic among peasants becomes a rout. An indescribably confused flight ensued.

In a few instants the market-hall was empty—the terrified rustics broke away in all directions; the officers were powerless; Imânus uselessly killed two or three fugitives; nothing was to be heard but the cry—"Save ourselves!" The army poured through the streets of the town like water through the holes of a sieve, and dispersed into the open country with the rapidity of a cloud carried along by a whirlwind. Some fled toward Châteauneuf, some toward Plerguer, others toward Autrain.

The Marquis de Lantenac watched this stampede. He spiked the guns with his own hands and then retreated—the last of all, slowly, composedly, saying to himself—"Decidedly, the peasants will not stand. We must have the English."

CHAPTER IV.

"IT IS THE SECOND TIME."

THE victory was complete.

Gauvain turned toward the men of the Bonnet Rouge battalion, and said—"You are twelve, but you are equal to a thousand."

Praise from a chief was the cross or honor of those times.

Guéchamp, dispatched beyond the town by Gauvain, pursued the fugitives and captured a great number.

Torches were lighted and the town was searched. All who could not escape surrendered. They illuminated the principal street with fire-pots. It was strewn with dead and dying. The root of a combat must always be torn out; a few desperate groups here and there still resisted; they were surrounded, and threw down their arms.

Gauvain had remarked, amid the frantic pell-mell of the retreat, an intrepid man, a sort of agile and robust form, who protected the flight of others, but had not himself fled. This peasant had used his gun so energetically—the barrel for firing, the butt-end for knocking down—that he had broken it; now he grasped a pistol in one hand and a sabre in the other. No one dared approach him. Suddenly Gauvain saw him reel and support himself against a pillar of the broad street. The man had just been wounded. But he still clutched the sabre and pistol in his fists. Gauvain put his sword under his arm and went up to him.

"Surrender," said he.

The man looked steadily at him. The blood ran through his clothing from a wound which he had received, and made a pool at his feet.

"You are my prisoner," added Gauvain. The man remained silent.

"What is your name?"

The man answered, "I am called the Shadow-dancer."

"You are a brave man," said Gauvain. And he held out his hand.

The man cried, "Long live the King!"

Gathering up all his remaining strength, he raised both arms at once, fired his pistol at Gauvain's heart, and dealt a blow at his head with the sabre.

He did it with the swiftness of a tiger, but some one else had been still more prompt. This was a man on horseback, who had arrived unobserved a few minutes before. This man, seeing the Vendean raise the sabre and pistol, rushed between him and Gauvain. But for this interposition, Gauvain would have been killed. The horse received the pistol-shot, the man received the sabre-stroke, and both fell. It all happened in the time it would have needed to utter a cry.

The Vendean sank on his side upon the pavement.

The sabre had struck the man full in the face; he lay senseless on the stones. The horse was killed.

Gauvain approached. "Who is this man," said he.

He studied him. The blood from the gash inundated the wounded man, and spread a red mask over his face. It was impossible to distinguish his features, but one could see that his hair was gray.

"This man has saved my life," continued Gauvain. "Does any one here know him?"

"Commandant," said a soldier, "he came into the town a few minutes ago. I saw him enter; he came by the road from Pontorsin."

The chief surgeon hurried up with his instrument-case. The wounded man was still insensible. The surgeon examined him and said:

"A simple gash. It is nothing. It can be sewed up. In eight days he will be on his feet again. It was a beautiful sabre-stroke!"

The sufferer wore a cloak, a tricolored sash, pistols, and a sabre. He was laid on a litter. They undressed him. A bucket of fresh water was brought; the surgeon washed the cut; the face began to be visible; Gauvain studied it with profound attention.

"Has he any papers on him?" he asked.

The surgeon felt in the stranger's side-pocket and drew out a pocket-book, which he handed to Gauvain.

The wounded man, restored by the cold water, began to come to himself. His eyelids moved slightly.

Gauvain examined the pocket-book; he found in it a sheet of paper, folded four times; he opened this and read: "Committee of Public Safety. The Citizen Cimourdain."

He uttered a cry—"Cimourdain!"

The wounded man opened his eyes at this exclamation.

Gauvain was absolutely frantic.

"Cimourdain! it is you! This is the second time you have saved my life."

Cimourdain looked at him. A gleam of ineffable joy lighted his bleeding face.

Gauvain fell on his knees beside him, crying, "My master!"

"Thy father," said Cimourdain.

CHAPTER V.

THE DROP OF COLD WATER.

THEY had not met for many years, but their hearts had never been parted; they recognized each other as if they had separated the evening before.



CHARLOTTE CORDAY KILLING MARAT.

An ambulance had been improvised in the town-hall of Dol. Cimourdain was placed on a bed in a little room next the great common chamber of the other wounded. The surgeon sewed up the cut and put an end to the demonstrations of affection between the two men, judging that Cimourdain ought to be left to sleep. Besides, Gauvain was claimed by the thousand occupations which are the duties and cares of victory. Cimourdain remained alone, but he did not sleep: he was consumed by two fevers—that of his wound and that of his joy.

He did not sleep, and still it did not seem to himself that he was awake. Could it be possible that his dream was realized? Cimourdain had long ceased to believe that such happiness could come to him, yet here it was. He had re-found Gauvain. He had left him a child, he found him a man; he found him great, formidable, intrepid. He found him triumphant, and triumphing for the people. Gauvain was the real support of the Revolution in Vendée, and it was he, Cimourdain, who had given this tower of strength to the Republic. This victor was his pupil. The light which he saw illuminating this youthful face—reserved, perhaps, for the Republican Pantheon—was his own thought: his, Cimourdain's. His disciple—the child of his spirit—was from henceforth a hero, and before long would be a glory. It seemed to Cimourdain that he saw the apotheosis of his own soul. He had just seen how Gauvain made war; he was like Chiron, who had watched Achilles fight. There was a mysterious analogy between the priest and the centaur, for the priest is only half-man.

All the chances of this adventure, mingled with the sleeplessness caused by his wound, filled Cimourdain with a sort of mysterious intoxication. He saw a glo-

rious youthful destiny rising, and what added to his profound joy was the possession of full power over this destiny; another success like that which he had just witnessed, and Cimourdain would only need to speak a single word to induce the Republic to confide any army to Gauvain. Nothing dazzles like the astonishment of complete victory. It was an era when each man had his military dream; each one wanted to make a general: Danton wished to appoint Westermann, Marat wished to appoint Rossignol, Hébert wished to appoint Rousin, Robespierre wished to put these all aside. Why not Gauvain? asked Cimourdain of himself; and he dreamed. All possibilities were before him: he passed from one hypothesis to another; all obstacles vanished; when a man puts his foot on that ladder, he does not stop; it is an infinite ascent; one starts from earth and one reaches the stars. A great general is only a leader of armies; a great captain is at the same time a leader of ideas; Cimourdain dreamed of Gauvain as a great captain. He seemed to see—for reverie travels swiftly—Gauvain on the ocean, chasing the English; on the Rhine, chastising the Northern kings; on the Pyrenees, repulsing Spain; on the Alps, making a signal to Rome to rouse itself. There were two men in Cimourdain—one tender, the other stern; both were satisfied, for the inexorable was his ideal, and at the same time that he saw Gauvain noble, he saw him terrible. Cimourdain thought of all that it was necessary to destroy before beginning to build up, and said to himself—“Verily, this is no time for tendernesses. Gauvain will be ‘up to the mark’” (an expression of the period).

Cimourdain pictured Gauvain spurning the shadows with his foot, with a breastplate of light, a meteor-glare on his brow,

rising on the grand ideal wings of Justice, Reason, and Progress, but with a sword in his hand : an angel—a destroyer likewise.

In the height of this reverie, which was almost an ecstasy, he heard through the half-open door a conversation in the great hall of the ambulance which was next his chamber. He recognized Gauvain's voice; through all those years of separation that voice had rung ever in his ear, and the voice of the man had still a tone of the childish voice he had loved. He listened. There was a sound of soldier's footsteps; one of the men said:

"Commandant, this is the man who fired at you. While nobody was watching, he dragged himself into a cellar. We found him. Here he is."

Then Cimourdain heard this dialogue between Gauvain and the prisoner:

"You are wounded?"

"I am well enough to be shot."

"Lay that man on a bed. Dress his wounds; take care of him; cure him."

"I wish to die."

"You must live. You tried to kill me in the King's name; I show you mercy in the name of the Republic."

A shadow passed across Cimourdain's forehead. He was like a man waking up with a start, and he murmured with a sort of sinister dejection—

"In truth, he is one of the merciful."

CHAPTER VI.

A HEALED WOUND; A BLEEDING HEART.

A CUT heals quickly; but there was in a certain place a person more seriously wounded than Cimourdain. It was the

woman who had been shot, whom the beggar Tellemarch had picked up out of the great lake of blood at the farm of Herben-Pail.

Michelle Fléchard was even in a more critical situation than Tellemarch had believed. There was a wound in the shoulder-blade corresponding to the wound above the breast; at the same time that the ball broke her collar-bone, another ball traversed her shoulder, but, as the lungs were not touched, she might recover. Tellemarch was a "philosopher," a peasant phrase which means a little of a doctor, a little of a surgeon, and a little of a sorcerer. He carried the wounded woman to his forest lair, laid her upon his seaweed bed, and treated her by the aid of those mysterious things called "simples," and thanks to him she lived.

The collar-bone knitted together, the wounds in the breast and shoulder closed; after a few weeks she was convalescent. One morning she was able to walk out of the carnichot, leaning on Tellemarch, and seat herself beneath the trees in the sunshine. Tellemarch knew little about her; wounds in the breast demand silence, and during the almost death-like agony which had preceded her recovery she had scarcely spoken a word. When she tried to speak, Tellemarch stopped her, but she kept up an obstinate reverie; he could see in her eyes the sombre going and coming of poignant thoughts. But this morning she was quite strong; she could almost walk alone; a cure is a paternity, and Tellemarch watched her with delight. The good old man began to smile. He said to her:

"We are upon our feet again; we have no more wounds."

"Except in the heart," said she.

She added, presently—"Then you have no idea where they are."

"Who are 'they?'" demanded Tellemarch.

"My children."

This "then" expressed a whole world of thoughts; it signified—"Since you do not talk to me, since you have been so many days beside me without opening your mouth, since you stop me each time I attempt to break the silence, since you seem to fear that I shall speak, it is because you have nothing to tell me."

Often in her fever, in her wanderings, her delirium, she had called her children, and had seen clearly (for delirium makes its observations) that the old man did not reply to her.

The truth was, Tellemarch did not know what to say to her. It is not easy to tell a mother that her children are lost. And then, what did he know? Nothing. He knew that a mother had been shot, that this mother had been found on the ground by himself, that when he had taken her up she was almost a corpse, that this quasi-corpse had three children, and that Lantenac, after having had the mother shot, carried off the little ones. All his information ended there. What had become of the children? Were they even living? He knew, because he had inquired, that there were two boys and a little girl, barely weaned. Nothing more. He asked himself a host of questions concerning this unfortunate group, but could answer none of them. The people of the neighborhood whom he had interrogated contented themselves with shaking their heads. The Marquis de Lantenac was a man of whom they did not willingly talk.

They did not willingly talk of De Lantenac, and they did not willingly talk to Tellemarch. Peasants have a species of suspicion peculiar to themselves. They did not like Tellemarch. Tellemarch the Caimand was a puzzling man. Why was

he always studying the sky? What was he doing and what was he thinking in his long hours of stillness? Yes, indeed, he was odd! In this district in full warfare, in full conflagration, in high tumult; where all men had only one business—devastation—and one work—carnage; where whosoever could burned a house, cut the throats of a family, massacred an outpost, sacked a village; where nobody thought of anything but laying ambushes for one another, drawing one another into snares, killing one another—this solitary, absorbed in nature, as if submerged in the immense peacefulness of its beauties, gathering herbs and plants, occupied solely with the flowers, the birds, and the stars, was evidently a dangerous man. Plainly he was not in possession of his reason; he did not lie in wait behind thickets; he did not fire a shot at any one. Hence he created a certain dread about him.

"That man is mad," said the passers-by.

Tellemarch was more than an isolated man—he was shunned. People asked him no questions and gave him few answers; so he had not been able to inform himself as he could have wished. The war had drifted elsewhere; the armies had gone to fight farther off; the Marquis de Lantenac had disappeared from the horizon, and in Tellemarch's state of mind for him to be conscious there was a war it was necessary for it to set its foot on him.

After that cry—"My children"—Tellemarch ceased to smile, and the woman went back to her thoughts. What was passing in that soul? It was as if she looked out from the depths of a gulf. Suddenly she turned toward Tellemarch, and cried anew, almost with an accent of rage, "My children!"

Tellemarch drooped his head like one

guilty. He was thinking of this Marquis de Lantenac, who certainly was not thinking of him, and who probably no longer remembered that he existed. He accounted for this to himself, saying, "A lord—when he is in danger, he knows you; when he is once out of it, he does not know you any longer."

And he asked himself, "But why, then, did I save this lord?" And he answered his own question, "Because he was a man." Thereupon he remained thoughtful for some time, then began again mentally, "Am I very sure of that?"

He repeated his bitter words, "If I had known!"

This whole adventure overwhelmed him, for in that which he had done he perceived a sort of enigma. He meditated dolorously. A good action might sometimes be evil. He who saves the wolf kills the sheep. He who sets the vulture's wing is responsible for his talons. He felt himself in truth guilty. The unreasoning anger of this mother was just. Still, to have saved her consoled him for having saved the marquis.

But the children?

The mother meditated also. The reflections of these two went on side by side; and, perhaps, though without speech, met one another amid the shadows of reverie.

The woman's eyes, with a night-like gloom in their depths, fixed themselves anew on Tellemarch.

"Nevertheless, that cannot be allowed to pass in this way," said she.

"Hush!" returned Tellemarch, laying his finger on his lips.

She continued: "You did wrong to save me, and I am angry with you for it. I would rather be dead, because I am sure I should see them then. I should know where they are. They would not see me,

but I should be near them. The dead—they ought to have power to protect."

He took her arm and felt her pulse.

"Calm yourself; you are bringing back your fever."

She asked him almost harshly, "When can I go away from here?"

"Go away?"

"Yes. Walk."

"Never, if you are not reasonable. Tomorrow, if you are wise."

"What do you call being wise?"

"Having confidence in God."

"God! What has He done with my children?"

Her mind seemed wandering. Her voice became very sweet.

"You understand," she said to him, "I can not rest like this. You have never had any children, but I have. That makes a difference. One can not judge of a thing when one does not know what it is. You never had any children, had you?"

"No," replied Tellemarch.

"And I—I had nothing besides them. What am I without my children? I should like to have somebody explain to me why I have not my children. I feel that things happen, but I do not understand. They killed my husband; they shot me; all the same, I do not understand it."

"Come," said Tellemarch, "there is the fever taking you again. Do not talk any more."

She looked at him and relapsed into silence.

From this day she spoke no more.

Tellemarch was obeyed more absolutely than he liked. She spent long hours of stupefaction, crouched at the foot of an old tree. She dreamed, and held her peace. Silence makes an impenetrable refuge for simple souls that have been down into the innermost depths of suffering. She seemed to relinquish all effort to

understand. To a certain extent despair is unintelligible to the despairing.

Tellemarch studied her with sympathetic interest. In presence of this anguish the old man had thoughts such as might have come to a woman. "Oh yes," he said to himself, "her lips do not speak, but her eyes talk. I know well what is the matter—what her one idea is. To have been a mother, and to be one no longer! To have been a nurse, and to be so no more! She can not resign herself. She thinks about the tiniest child of all, that she was nursing not long ago. She thinks of it; thinks—thinks. In truth, it must be so sweet to feel a little rosy mouth that draws your very soul out of your body, and who, with the life that is yours, makes a life for itself."

He kept silence on his side, comprehending the impotency of speech in face of an absorption like this. The persistence of an all-absorbing idea is terrible. And how to make a mother thus beset hear reason? Maternity is inexplicable; you can not argue with it. That it is which renders a mother sublime; she becomes unreasoning; the maternal instinct is divinely animal. The mother is no longer a woman, she is a wild creature. Her children are her cubs. Hence in the mother there is something at once inferior and superior to argument. A mother has an unerring instinct. The immense mysterious Will of creation is within her and guides her. Hers is a blindness superhumanly enlightened.

Now Tellemarch desired to make this unhappy creature speak; he did not succeed. On one occasion he said to her: "As ill-luck will have it, I am old, and I can not walk any longer. At the end of a quarter of an hour my strength is exhausted, and I am obliged to rest; if it were not for that, I would accompany you.

After all, perhaps it is fortunate that I can not. I should be rather a burden than useful to you. I am tolerated here; but the Blues are suspicious of me, as being a peasant; and the peasants suspect me of being a wizard."

He waited for her to reply. She did not even raise her eyes. A fixed idea ends in madness or heroism. But of what heroism is a poor peasant woman capable? None. She can be a mother, and that is all. Each day she buried herself deeper in her reverie. Tellemarch watched her. He tried to give her occupation; he brought her needles and thread and a thimble; and at length, to the satisfaction of the poor Caimand, she began some sewing. She dreamed, but she worked, a sign of health; her energy was returning little by little. She mended her linen, her garments, her shoes; but her eyes looked cold and glassy as ever. As she bent over her needle, she sang unearthly melodies in a low voice. She murmured names—probably the names of children—but not distinctly enough for Tellemarch to catch them. She would break off abruptly and listen to the birds, as if she thought they might have brought her tidings. She watched the weather. Her lips would move—she was speaking low to herself. She made a bag and filled it with chestnuts. One morning Tellemarch saw her preparing to set forth, her eyes gazing away into the depths of the forest.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

She replied, "I am going to look for them."

He did not attempt to detain her.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TWO POLES OF THE TRUTH.

At the end of a few weeks, which had been filled with the vicissitudes of civil war, the district of Fougères could talk of nothing but the two men who were opposed to each other, and yet were occupied in the same work, that is, fighting side by side the great revolutionary combat.

The savage Vendean duel continued, but the Vendée was losing ground. In Ille-et-Vilaine in particular, thanks to the young commander who had at Dol so opportunely replied to the audacity of six thousand Royalists by the audacity of fifteen hundred patriots, the insurrection, if not quelled, was at least greatly weakened and circumscribed. Several lucky hits had followed that one, and out of these successes had grown a new position of affairs.

Matters had changed their face, but a singular complication had arisen.

In all this portion of the Vendée the Republic had the upper hand—that was beyond a doubt; but which republic? In the triumph which was opening out, two forms of republic made themselves felt—the republic of terror and the republic of clemency—the one desirous to conquer by rigor, and the other by mildness. Which would prevail? These two forms—the conciliating and the implacable—were represented by two men, each of whom possessed his special influence and authority: the one a military commander, the other a civil delegate. Which of them would prevail? One of the two, the delegate, had a formidable basis of support; he had arrived bearing the threatening watchword of the Paris Commune to the battalions of Santerre—“No mercy; no quarter!” He had, in order to put everything under his control, the decree of the Con-

vention, ordaining “death to whomsoever should set at liberty and help a captive rebel chief to escape.” He had full powers, emanating from the Committee of Public Safety, and an injunction commanding obedience to him as delegate, signed Robespierre, Danton, Marat. The other, the soldier, had on his side only this strength—pity.

He had only his own arm, which chastised the enemy, and his heart, which pardoned them. A conqueror, he believed that he had the right to spare the conquered.

Hence arose a conflict, hidden but deep, between these two men. The two stood in different atmospheres; both combating the rebellion, and each having his own thunderbolt—that of the one, victory; that of the other, terror.

Throughout all the Bocage nothing was talked of but them; and what added to the anxiety of those who watched them from every quarter was the fact that these two men so diametrically opposed were at the same time closely united. These two antagonists were friends. Never sympathy loftier and more profound joined two hearts; the stern had saved the life of the clement, and bore on his face the wound received in the effort. These two men were the incarnation—the one of life, the other of death; the one was the principle of destruction, the other of peace, and they loved each other. Strange problem. Imagine Orestes merciful and Pylades pitiless. Picture Arimanes the brother of Ormus!

Let us add that the one of the pair called “the ferocious” was, at the same time, the most brotherly of men. He dressed the wounded, cared for the sick, passed his days and nights in the ambulance and hospitals, was touched by the sight of barefooted children, had nothing for him-

self, gave all to the poor. He was present at all the battles; he marched at the head of the columns, and in the thickest of the fight, armed (for he had in his belt a sabre and two pistols), yet disarmed, because no one had ever seen him draw his sabre or touch his pistols. He faced blows, and did not return them. It was said that he had been a priest.

One of these men was Gauvain; the other was Cimourdain.

There was friendship between the two men, but hatred between the two principles; this hidden war could not fail to burst forth. One morning the battle began.

Cimourdain said to Gauvain: "What have we accomplished?"

Gauvain replied: "You know as well as I. I have dispersed Lantenac's bands. He has only a few men left. Then he is driven back to the forest of Fougères. In eight days he will be surrounded."

"And in fifteen days?"

"He will be taken."

"And then?"

"You have read my notice?"

"Yes. Well?"

"He will be shot."

"More clemency! He must be guillotined."

"As for me," said Gauvain, "I am for a military death."

"And I," replied Cimourdain, "for a revolutionary death."

He looked Gauvain in the face, and added: "Why did you set at liberty those nuns of the convent of Saint-Mare-le-Blanc?"

"I do not make war on women," answered Gauvain.

"Those women hate the people. And where hate is concerned, one woman outweighs ten men. Why did you refuse to send to the Revolutionary Tribunal all

that herd of old fanatical priests who were taken at Louvigné?"

"I do not make war on old men."

"An old priest is worse than a young one. Rebellion is more dangerous preached by white hairs. Men have faith in wrinkles. No false pity, Gauvain. The regicides are liberators. Keep your eye fixed on the tower of the Temple."

"The Temple tower! I would bring the Dauphin out of it. I do not make war on children."

Cimourdain's eyes grew stern.

"Gauvain, learn that it is necessary to make war on a woman when she calls herself Marie Antoinette, on an old man when he is named Pius VI. and Pope, and upon a child when he is named Louis Capet."

"My master, I am not a politician."

"Try not to be a dangerous man. Why, at the attack on the post of Cossé, when the rebel Jean Treton, driven back and lost, flung himself alone, sabre in hand, against the whole column, didst thou cry, 'Open the ranks! Let him pass!'"

"Because one does not set fifteen hundred to kill a single man."

"Why, at the Cailleterie d'Astillé, when you saw your soldiers about to kill the Vendean Joseph Bézier, who was wounded and dragging himself along, did you exclaim, 'Go on before! This is my affair!' and then fire your pistol in the air?"

"Because one does not kill a man on the ground."

"And you were wrong. Both are to-day chiefs of bands. Joseph Bézier is Mustache, and Jean Treton is Jambe d'Argent. In saving those two men you gave two enemies to the Republic."

"Certainly I could wish to give her friends, and not enemies."

"Why, after the victory of Landéan,

did you not shoot your three hundred peasant prisoners?"

"Because Bonchamp had shown mercy to the Republican prisoners, and I wanted it said that the Republic showed mercy to the Royalist prisoners."

"But, then, if you take Lantenac, you will pardon him?"

"No."

"Why? Since you showed mercy to the three hundred peasants?"

"The peasants are ignorant men; Lantenac knows what he does."

"But Lantenac is your kinsman."

"France is the nearest."

"Lantenac is an old man."

"Lantenac is a stranger. Lantenac has no age. Lantenac summons the English. Lantenac is invasion. Lantenac is the enemy of the country. The duel between him and me can only finish by his death or mine."

"Gauvain, remember this vow."

"It is sworn."

There was silence, and the two looked at each other.

Then Gauvain resumed: "It will be a bloody date, this year '93 in which we live."

"Take care!" cried Cimourdain. "Terrible duties exist. Do not accuse that which is not accusable. Since when is it that the illness is the fault of the physician? Yes, the characteristic of this tremendous year is its pitilessness. Why? Because it is the grand revolutionary year. This year in which we live is the incarnation of the Revolution. The Revolution has an enemy—the old world—and it is without pity for it; just as the surgeon has an enemy—gangrene—and is without pity for it. The Revolution extirpates royalty in the king, aristocracy in the noble, despotism in the soldier, superstition in the priest, barbarism in

the judge; in a word, everything which is tyranny, in all which is the tyrant. The operation is fearful; the Revolution performs it with a sure hand. As to the amount of sound flesh which it sacrifices, demand of Boerhaave what he thinks in regard to that. What tumor does not cause a loss of blood in its cutting away? Does not the extinguishing of a conflagration demand an energy as fierce as that of the fire itself? These formidable necessities are the very condition of success. A surgeon resembles a butcher; a healer may have the appearance of an executioner. The Revolution devotes itself to its fatal work. It mutilates, but it saves. What! You demand pity for the virus! You wish it to be merciful to that which is poisonous! It will not listen. It holds the post; it will exterminate it. It makes a deep wound in civilization, from whence will spring health to the human race. You suffer? Without doubt. How long will it last? The time necessary for the operation. After that you will live. The Revolution amputates the world. Hence this hemorrhage—'93."

"The surgeon is calm," said Gauvain, "and the men that I see are violent."

"The Revolution," replied Cimourdain, "needs savage workmen to aid it. It pushes aside every hand that trembles. It has only faith in the inexorables. Danton is the terrible; Robespierre is the inflexible; Saint-Just is the immovable; Marat is the implacable. Take care, Gauvain. Those names are necessary. They are worth as much as armies to us. They will terrify Europe."

"And perhaps the future also," said Gauvain.

He checked himself, and resumed: "For that matter, my master, you err; I accuse no one. According to me, the true point of view of the Revolution is its

irresponsibility. Nobody is innocent, nobody is guilty. Louis XVI. is a sheep thrown among lions. He wishes to escape, he tries to flee, he seeks to defend himself; he would bite if he could. But one is not a lion at will. His absurdity passes for crime. This enraged sheep shows his teeth. 'The traitor!' cry the lions. And they eat him. That done, they fight among themselves."

"The sheep is a brute."

"And the lions, what are they?"

This retort set Cimourdain thinking. He raised his head, and answered, "These lions are consciences. These lions are ideas. These lions are principles."

"They produce the reign of terror."

"One day, the Revolution will be the justification of this terror."

"Beware lest the terror become the calumny of the Revolution."

Gauvain continued: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity! these are the dogmas of peace and harmony. Why give them an alarming aspect? What is it we want? To bring the peoples to a universal republic. Well, do not let us make them afraid. What can intimidation serve? The people can no more be attracted by a scarecrow than birds can. One must not do evil to bring about good. One does not overturn the throne in order to leave the gibbet standing. Death to kings, and life to nations! Strike off the crowns; spare the heads. The Revolution is concord, not fright. Clement ideas are ill served by cruel men. Amnesty is to me the most beautiful word in human language. I will only shed blood in risking my own. Besides, I simply know how to fight; I am nothing but a soldier. But if I may not pardon, victory is not worth the trouble it costs. During battle let us be the enemies of our enemies, and after the victory their brothers."

"Take care!" repeated Cimourdain, for the third time. "Gauvain, you are more to me than a son; take care!"

Then he added, thoughtfully—"In a period like ours, pity may become one of the forms of treason."

Any one listening to the talk of these two men might have fancied he heard a dialogue between the sword and the axe.

CHAPTER VIII.

DOLOROSA.

IN the meanwhile the mother was seeking her little ones. She went straight forward. How did she live? It is impossible to say. She did not know herself. She walked day and night; she begged, she ate herbs, she lay on the ground, she slept in the open air, in the thickets, under the stars, sometimes in the rain and wind.

She wandered from village to village, from farm to farm, seeking a clew. She stopped on the thresholds of the peasants' cots. Her dress was in rags. Sometimes she was welcomed, sometimes she was driven away. When she could not get into the houses, she went into the woods.

She was not known in the district; she was ignorant of everything except Sis-coignard and the parish of Azé; she had no route marked out; she retraced her steps; traveled roads already gone over; made useless journeys. Sometimes she followed the highway, sometimes a cart-track, as often the paths among the copses. In these aimless wanderings she had worn out her miserable garments. She

had shoes at first, then she walked bare-foot, then with her feet bleeding. She crossed the track of warfare, among gunshots, hearing nothing, seeing nothing, avoiding nothing—seeking her children. Revolt was everywhere; there were no more gendarmes, no more mayors, no authorities of any sort. She had only to deal with chance passers.

She spoke to them. She asked—"Have you seen three little children anywhere?"

Those she addressed would look at her.

"Two boys and a girl," she would say.

Then she would name them: "René-Jean, Gros-Alain, Georgette. You have not seen them?"

She would ramble on thus: "The eldest is four years and a half old; the little girl is twenty months."

Then would come the cry—"Do you know where they are? They have been taken from me."

The listeners would stare at her, and that was all.

When she saw that she was not understood, she would say, "It is because they belong to me—that is why."

The people would pass on their way. Then she would stand still, uttering no further word, but digging at her breast with her nails. However, one day, a peasant listened to her. The good man set himself to thinking.

"Wait, now," said he. "Three children?"

"Yes."

"Two boys—?"

"And a girl."

"You are hunting for them?"

"Yes."

"I have heard talk of a lord who had taken three little children and had them with him."

"Where is this man?" she cried. "Where are they?"

The peasant replied, "To La Tourgue."

"Shall I find my children there?"

"It may easily be."

"You say?"

"La Tourgue."

"What is that—La Tourgue?"

"It is a place."

"Is it a village—a castle—a farm?"

"I never was there."

"Is it far?"

"It is not near."

"In which direction?"

"Toward Fougères."

"Which way must I go?"

"You are at Vantortes," said the peasant; "you must leave Ernée to the left and Coxelles to the right; you will pass by Lorchamp and cross the Leroux." He pointed his finger to the west. "Always straight before you and toward the sunset."

Ere the peasant had dropped his arm, she was hurrying on.

He cried after her—"But take care. They are fighting over there."

She did not answer or turn round; on she went, straight before her.

CHAPTER IX.

A PROVINCIAL BASTILE.

FORTY years ago, a traveler who entered the forest of Fougères from the side of Laignelet, and left it toward Parigné, was met on the border of this vast old wood by a sinister spectacle. As he came out of the thickets, La Tourgue rose abruptly before him.

Not La Tourgue living, but La Tourgue dead. La Tourgue cracked, battered,

seamed, dismantled. The ruin of an edifice is as much its ghost as a phantom is that of man. No more lugubrious vision could strike the gaze than that of La Tourgue. What the traveler had before his eyes was a lofty round tower, standing alone at the corner of the wood like a malefactor. This tower, rising from a perpendicular rock, was so severe and solid that it looked almost like a bit of Roman architecture, and the frowning mass gave the idea of strength even amid its ruin. It was Roman in a way, since it was Romanic. Begun in the ninth century, it had been finished in the twelfth, after the third Crusade. The peculiar ornaments of the mouldings told its age. On ascending the height, one perceived a breach in the wall; if one ventured to enter, he found himself within the tower—it was empty. It resembled somewhat the inside of a stone trumpet set upright on the ground. From top to bottom no partitions, no ceilings, no floors; there were places where arches and chimneys had been torn away; falconet embrasures were seen; at different heights, rows of granite corbels and a few transverse beams marked where the different stories had been; these beams were covered with the ordure of night birds. The colossal wall was fifteen feet in thickness at the base and twelve at the summit; here and there were chinks and holes which had been doors, through which one caught glimpses of staircases in the shadowy interior of the wall. The passer-by who penetrated there at evening heard the cry of the wood-owl and the Brittany heron, and saw beneath his feet brambles, stones, reptiles, and, above his head, across a black circle which looked like the mouth of an enormous well, he could perceive the stars.

The neighborhood kept a tradition that in the upper stories of this tower there

were secret doors formed like those in the tombs of the Indian kings, of great stones turning on pivots; opening by a spring, and forming part of the wall when closed; an architectural mystery which the Crusaders had brought from the East along with the pointed arch. When these doors were shut, it was impossible to discover them, so accurately were they fitted into the other stones. At this day such doors may still be seen in those mysterious Lybian cities which escaped the burial of the twelve towns in the time of Tiberius.

CHAPTER X.

THE BREACH.

THE breach by which one entered the ruin had been the opening of a mine. For a connoisseur, familiar with Errard, Sardi, and Pagan, this mine had been skillfully planned. The fire-chamber, shaped like a mitre, was proportioned to the strength of the keep it had been intended to disem-bowel. It must have held at least two hundredweight of powder. The channel was serpentine, which does better service than a straight one. The crumbling of the mine left naked among the broken stones the saucisse which had the requisite diameter, that of a hen's egg.

The explosion had left a deep rent in the wall by which the besiegers could enter. This tower had evidently sustained at different periods real sieges conducted according to rule. It was scarred with balls, and these balls were not all of the same epoch. Each projectile has its peculiar way of marking a rampart, and those of every sort had left their traces on this

keep, from the stone balls of the fourteenth century to the iron ones of the eighteenth.

The breach gave admittance into what must have been the ground-floor. In the wall of the tower opposite the breach there opened the gateway of a crypt cut in the rock and stretching among the foundations of the tower under the whole extent of the ground-floor hall.

This crypt, three fourths filled up, was cleared out in 1855 under the direction of Monsieur Auguste Le Prevost, the antiquary of Bernay.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OUBLIETTE.

THIS crypt was the oubliette. Every keep had one. This crypt, like many penal prisons of that era, had two stories. The upper floor, which was entered by the gateway, was a vaulted chamber of considerable size, on a level with the ground-floor hall. On the walls could be seen two parallel and vertical furrows, extending from one side to the other, and passing along the vault of the roof, in which they had left deep ruts like old wheel-tracks. It was what they were in fact. These two furrows had been hollowed by two wheels. Formerly, in feudal days, victims were torn limb from limb in this chamber by a method less noisy than dragging them at the tails of horses. There had been two wheels so immense that they touched the walls and the arch. To each of these wheels an arm and a leg of the victim were attached, then the wheels were turned in the inverse direc-

tion, which crushed the man. It required great force, hence the furrows which the wheels had worn in the wall as they grazed it. A chamber of this kind may still be seen at Viandin.

Below this room there was another. That was the real dungeon. It was not entered by a door; one penetrated into it by a hole. The victim, stripped naked, was let down by means of a rope placed under his arm-pits into the dungeon, through an opening left in the centre of the flagging of the upper chamber. If he persisted in living, food was flung to him through this aperture. A hole of this sort may yet be seen at Bouillon.

The wind swept up through this opening. The lower room, dug out beneath the ground-floor hall, was a well rather than a chamber. It had water at the bottom, and an icy wind filled it. This wind, which killed the prisoner in the depths, preserved the life of the captive in the room above. It rendered his prison respirable. The captive above, groping about beneath his vault, only got air by this hole. For the rest, whatever entered or fell there could not get out again. It was for the prisoner to be cautious in the darkness. A false step might make the prisoner in the upper room a prisoner in the dungeon below. That was his affair. If he clung to life, this hole was a peril; if he wished to be rid of it, this hole was his resource. The upper floor was the dungeon; the lower, the tomb. A superposition which resembled Society at that period.

It was what our ancestors called a moat-dungeon.

The thing having disappeared, the name has no longer any significance in our ears. Thanks to the Revolution, we hear the words pronounced with indifference.

Outside the tower, above the breach,

which forty years since was the only means of ingress, might be seen an opening larger than the other loophole, from which hung an iron grating bent and loosened.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BRIDGE-CASTLE.

ON the opposite side from the breach a stone bridge was connected with the tower, having three arches still in almost perfect preservation. This bridge had supported a building of which some fragments remained. It had evidently been destroyed by fire; there were left only portions of the framework, between whose blackened ribs the daylight peeped, as it rose beside the tower like a skeleton beside a phantom.

This ruin is to-day completely demolished—not a trace of it is left. It only needs one day and a single peasant to destroy that which it took many centuries and many kings to build. *La Tourgue* is a rustic abbreviation for *La Tour-Gauvain* (the Tower of Gauvain), just as *La Jupelle* stands for *La Jupellière*, and *Pinson-le-Tort*, the nickname of a hunch-backed leader, is put for *Pinson-le-Tortu*.

La Tourgue, which forty years since was a ruin, and which is to-day a shadow, was a fortress in 1793. It was the old bastille of the Gauvains; toward the west guarding the entrance to the forest of Fougères, a forest which is itself now hardly a grove.

This citadel had been built on one of the great blocks of slate which abound between Mayenne and Dinan, scattered everywhere

among the thickets and heaths like missiles that had been flung in some conflict between Titans.

The tower made up the entire fortress; beneath the tower was the rock; at the foot of the rock one of those watercourses which the month of January turns into a torrent, and which the month of June dries up.

Thus protected, this fortress was in the Middle Ages almost impregnable. The bridge alone weakened it. The Gothic Gauvains had built without bridge. They got into it by one of those swinging foot-bridges which a blow of an axe sufficed to break away. As long as the Gauvains remained viscounts they contented themselves with this, but when they became marquises, and left the cavern for the court, they flung three arches across the torrent, and made themselves accessible on the side of the plain just as they had made themselves accessible to the king. The marquis of the seventeenth century, and the marquises of the eighteenth, no longer wished to be impregnable. An imitation of Versailles replaced the traditions of their ancestors.

Facing the tower, on the western side, there was a high plateau which ended in two plains; this plateau almost touched the tower, only separated from it by a very deep ravine through which ran the watercourse, which was a tributary of the Couesnon. The bridge which joined the fortress and the plateau was built up high on piers, and on these piers was constructed, as at Chenonceaux, an edifice in the Mansard style, more habitable than the tower. But the customs were still very rude; the lords continued to occupy chambers in the keep which were like dungeons. The building on the bridge, which was a sort of small castle, was made into a long corridor that served as

an entrance, and was called the hall of the guards; above this hall of the guards, which was a kind of entresol, a library was built; above the library, a granary. Long windows, with small panes in Bohemian glass; pilasters between the casements; medallions sculptured on the wall; three stories; below, bartizans and muskets; in the middle, books; on high, sacks of oats; the whole at once somewhat savage and very princely.

The tower rose gloomy and stern at the side. It overlooked this coquettish building with all its lugubrious height. From its platform one could destroy the bridge.

The two edifices, the one rude, the other elegant, clashed rather than contrasted. The two styles had nothing in keeping with one another. Although it should seem that two semicircles ought to be identical, nothing can be less alike than a full Roman arch and the classic arch-vault.

That tower, in keeping with the forests, made a strange neighbor for that bridge, worthy of Versailles. Imagine Alain Barbe-Torte giving his arm to Louis XIV. The juxtaposition was sinister. These two majesties thus mingled made up a whole which had something inexpressibly menacing in it.

From a military point of view, the bridge—we must insist upon this—was a traitor to the tower. It embellished, but disarmed; in gaining ornament the fortress lost strength. The bridge put it on a level with the plateau. Still impregnable on the side toward the forest, it became vulnerable toward the plain. Formerly it commanded the plateau; now it was commanded thereby. An enemy installed there would speedily become master of the bridge. The library and the granary would be for the assailant and against the

citadel. A library and a granary resemble each other in the fact that both books and straw are combustible. For an assailant who serves himself by fire, to burn Homer or to burn a bundle of straw, provided it make a flame, is all the same. The French proved this to the Germans by burning the library at Heidelberg, and the Germans proved it to the French by burning the library of Strasburg. This bridge, built onto the Tourgue, was, therefore, strategically, an error; but in the seventeenth century, under Colbert and Louvois, the Gauvain princes no more considered themselves besiegable than did the princes of Rohan or the princes of La Trémouille. Still the builders of the bridge had used certain precautions. In the first place they had foreseen the possibility of conflagration: below the three casements that looked down the stream they had fastened transversely to cramp-irons, which could still be seen half a century back, a strong ladder, whose length equaled the height of the two first stories of the bridge, a height which surpassed that of three ordinary stories. Secondly, they had guarded against assault. They had cut off the bridge by means of a low, heavy iron door; this door was arched; it was locked by a great key, which was hidden in a place known to the master alone, and, once closed, this door could defy a battering-ram and almost brave a cannon-ball. It was necessary to cross the bridge in order to reach this door, and to pass through the door in order to enter the tower. There was no other entrance.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE IRON DOOR.

THE second story of the small castle on the bridge was raised by the arches, so that it corresponded with the second story of the tower. It was at this height, for greater security, that the iron door had been placed.

The iron door opened toward the library on the bridge side, and toward a grand vaulted hall, with a pillar in the centre, on the side to the tower. This hall, as has already been said, was the second story of the keep. It was circular, like the tower; long loopholes, looking out on the fields, lighted it. The rude wall was naked, and nothing hid the stones, which were, however, symmetrically laid. This hall was reached by a winding staircase built in the wall, a very simple thing when walls are fifteen feet in thickness. In the Middle Ages a town had to be taken street by street, a street house by house, a house room by room. A fortress was besieged story by story. In this respect La Tourgue was very skillfully disposed, and was intractable and difficult. A spiral staircase, at first very steep, led from one floor to the other. The doors were sloping, and were not of the height of a man. To pass through it was necessary to bow the head; now a head bowed was a head cut off, and at each door the besieged awaited the besiegers.

Below the circular hall with the pillar were two similar chambers, which made the first and the ground floor, and above were three. Upon these six chambers, placed one upon another, the tower was closed by a lid of stone, which was the platform, and which could only be reached by a narrow watch-tower. The fifteen-feet thickness of wall which it had been necessary to pierce in order to place the

iron door, and in the middle of which it was set, imbedded it in a long arch, so that the door when closed was, both on the side toward the bridge and the side toward the tower, under a porch six or seven feet deep; when it was open, these two porches joined and made the entrance-arch.

In the thickness of the wall of the porch toward the bridge opened a low gate with a Saint Gilles's bolt, which led into the corridor of the first story beneath the library. This offered another difficulty to besiegers. The small castle of the bridge showed, on the side toward the plateau, only a perpendicular wall; and the bridge was cut there. A draw-bridge put it in communication with the plateau; and this draw-bridge (on account of the height of the plateau, never lowered except at an inclined plane) allowed access to the long corridor, called the guard-room. Once masters of this corridor, besiegers, in order to reach the iron door, would have been obliged to carry by main force the winding staircase which led to the second story.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LIBRARY.

As for the library, it was an oblong room, the width and length of the bridge, with a single door—the iron one. A false leaf-door, hung with green cloth, which it was only necessary to push, masked in the interior the entrance-arch of the tower. The library wall from floor to ceiling was filled with glazed book-cases, in the beautiful style of the seventeenth-century cabinet work. Six great windows, three on either

side, one above each arch, lighted this library. Through these windows the interior could be seen from the height of the plateau. In the spaces between these windows stood six marble busts on pedestals of sculptured oak: Hermolaüs, of Byzantium; Athenæus, the ancient grammarian; Suidas; Casaubon; Clovis, King of France; and his chancellor, Anachalus, who, for that matter, was no more chancellor than Clovis was king.

There were books of various sorts in this library. One has remained famous. It was an old folio with prints, having for title, "Saint Bartholomew," in great letters; and for second title, "Gospel according to Saint Bartholomew," preceded by a dissertation by Pantœnus, Christian philosopher, as to whether this gospel ought to be considered apocryphal, and whether Saint Bartholomew was the same as Nathanael. This book, considered an unique copy, was placed on a reading-desk in the middle of the library. In the last century, people came to see it as a curiosity.

CHAPTER XV.

THE GRANARY.

AS for the granary, which took, like the library, the oblong form of the bridge, it was simply that space beneath the wood-work of the roof. It was a great room filled with straw and hay, and lighted by six Mansard windows. There was no ornament, except a figure of Saint Bartholomew carved on the door, with this line beneath—

"Barnabas sanctus falcem jubet ire per herbam."

A lofty, wide tower, of six stories, pierced here and there with loopholes, having for entrance and egress a single door of iron, leading to a bridge-castle, closed by a draw-bridge. Behind the tower a forest; in front a plateau of heath, higher than the bridge, lower than the tower. Beneath the bridge, a deep, narrow ravine full of brushwood; a torrent in winter, a brook in spring-time, a stony moat in summer. This was the Tower Gauvain, called La Tourgue.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HOSTAGES.

JULY floated past—August came. A blast, fierce and heroic, swept over France. Two spectres had just past beyond the horizon: Marat with a dagger in his heart, Charlotte Corday headless. Affairs everywhere were waxing formidable. As to the Vendée, beaten in grand strategic schemes, she took refuge in little ones—more redoubtable, we have already said. This war was now an immense fight, scattered about among the woods. The disasters of the large army, called the Catholic and Royal, had commenced. The army from Mayence had been ordered into the Vendée. Eight thousand Vendéans had fallen at Ancenis; they had been repulsed from Nantes, dislodged from Montaign, expelled from Thouars, chased from Noirmoutier, flung headlong out of Chollet, Mortagne, and Saumur; they had evacuated Parthenay; they had abandoned Clisson; fallen back from Châtillon; lost a flag at Saint-Hilaire; had been beaten at Pornic, at the Sables, at Fontenay, Doué, at the Château d'Eau,

at the Ponts-de-Cé; they were kept in check at Luçon, were retreating from the Chataigneraye, and routed at the Roches-sur-Yon. But on the one hand they were menacing Rochelle, and on the other an English fleet in the Guernsey waters, commanded by General Craig, and bearing several English regiments and some of the best officers of the French navy, only waited a signal from the Marquis de Lantenac to land. This landing might make the Royalist revolt again victorious. Pitt was in truth a State malefactor. Policy has treasons sure as an assassin's dagger. Pitt stabbed our country and betrayed his own. To dishonor his country was to betray it; under him and through him England waged a Punic war. She spied, she cheated, she hid. Poacher and forger, she stopped at nothing; she descended to the very minutiae of hatred. She monopolized tallow, which cost five francs a pound. An Englishman was taken at Lille on whom was found a letter from Prigent, Pitt's agent in Vendée, which contained these lines: "I beg you to spare no money. We hope that the assassinations will be committed with prudence; disguised priests and women are the persons most fit for this duty.* Send sixty thousand francs to Rouen and fifty thousand to Caen." This letter was read in the Convention on the first of August by Barère. The cruelties of Parrein, and, later, the atrocities of Carrier, replied to these perfidies. The Republicans of Metz and the Republicans of the South were eager to march against the rebels. A decree ordered the formation of eighty companies of pioneers for burning the copses and thickets of the

Bocage. It was an unheard-of crisis. The war only ceased on one footing to begin on another. "No mercy! No prisoners!" was the cry of both parties. The history of that time is black with awful shadows.

During this month of August, La Tourgue was besieged. One evening, just as the stars were rising amid the calm twilight of the dog-days, when not a leaf stirred in the forest, not a blade of grass trembled on the plain, across the stillness of the night swept the sound of a horn. This horn was blown from the top of the tower.

The peal was answered by the voice of a clarion from below. On the summit of the tower stood an armed man; at the foot, a camp spread out in the shadow.

In the obscurity about the Tower Gauvain could be distinguished a moving mass of black shapes. It was a bivouac. A few fires began to blaze beneath the trees of the forest and among the heaths of the plateau, pricking the darkness here and there with luminous points, as if the earth were studding itself with stars at the same instant as the sky; but they were the sinister stars of war. On the side toward the plateau, the bivouac stretched out to the plains; and on the forest side extended into the thicket. La Tourgue was invested.

The outstretch of the besiegers' bivouac indicated a numerous force. The camp tightly clasped the fortress, coming close up to the rock on the side toward the tower, and close to the ravine on the bridge side.

There was a second sound of the horn, followed by another peal from the clarion.

This time the horn questioned and the trumpet replied.

It was the demand of the tower to the camp: "Can we speak to you?" The

* One need hardly say that this letter is apocryphal; at least, that it never emanated from Pitt.
—*Trans.*

clarion was the answer from the camp: "Yes."

At this period, the Vendéans, not being considered belligerents by the Convention, and a decree having forbidden the exchange of flags of truce with "the brigands," the armies supplemented as they could the means of communication which the law of nations authorizes in ordinary war and interdicts in civil strife. Hence on occasion a certain understanding between the peasant's horn and the military trumpet. The first call was only to attract attention; the second put the question, "Will you listen?" If on this second summons the clarion kept silent, it was a refusal; if the clarion replied, it was a consent. It signified, "Truce for a few moments."

The clarion having answered this second appeal, the man on the top of the tower spoke, and these words could be heard:

"Men, who listen to me, I am Gougele-Bruant, surnamed Brise-Bleu (Crush-the-Blues), because I have exterminated many of yours; surnamed also Imânus, because I mean to kill still more than I have already done. My finger was cut off by a blow from a sabre on the barrel of my gun in the attack at Granville; at Laval you guillotined my father, my mother, and my sister, Jacqueline, aged eighteen. This is who I am.

"I speak to you in the name of my lord Marquis Gauvain de Lantenac, Viscount de Fontenay, Breton Prince, lord of the seven forests—my master.

"Learn first that Monseigneur the Marquis, before shutting himself in this tower where you hold him blockaded, distributed the command among six chiefs, his lieutenants. He gave to Delière the district between the route of Brest and the route of Ernée; to Tréton, the district between Roë and Laval; to Jacquet, called Taille-

ger, the border of the Haut-Maine; to Gaulier, named Grand Pierre, Château Gonthier; to Lecomte, Craon; Fougères to Dubois Guy, and all Mayenne to De Rochambeau. So the taking of this fortress will not end matters for you; and even if Monseigneur the Marquis should die, the Vendée of God and the King will still live.

"That which I say—know this—is to warn you. Monseigneur is here by my side. I am the mouth through which his words pass. You who are besieging us, keep silence.

"This is what it is important for you to hear:

"Do not forget that the war you are making against us is without justice. We are men inhabiting our own country, and we fight honestly; we are simple and pure, beneath the will of God, as the grass is beneath the dew. It is the Republic which has attacked us; she comes to trouble us in our fields; she has burned our houses, our harvests, and ruined our farms, while our women and children were forced to wander with naked feet among the woods while the winter robin was still singing.

"You who are down there and who hear me, you have inclosed us in the forest and surrounded us in this tower; you have killed or dispersed those who joined us; you have cannon; you have added to your troop the garrisons and posts of Mortain, of Barenton, of Teilleul, of Landivy, of Evran, of Tinténiaç, and of Vitré, by which means you are four thousand five hundred soldiers who attack us, and we—we are nineteen men who defend ourselves.

"You have provisions and munitions.

"You have succeeded in mining and blowing up a corner of our rock and a bit of our wall.

"That has made a gap at the foot of the tower, and this gap is a breach by which you can enter, although it is not open to the sky; and the tower, still upright and strong, makes an arch above it.

"Now, you are preparing the assault.

"And we—first, Monseigneur the Marquis, who is Prince of Brittany, and secular Prior of the Abbey of Saint Marie de Lantenac, where a daily mass was established by Queen Jeanne; and, next to him, the other defenders of the tower, who are: the Abbé Turmeau, whose military name is Grand Francœur; my comrade, Guinoiseau, who is captain of Camp Vert; my comrade, Chante-en-Hiver, who is captain of Camp Avoine; my comrade, Musette, who is captain of Camp Fourmis; and I, peasant, born in the town of Daon, through which runs the brook Moriandre: we all—all have one thing to say to you.

"Men who are at the bottom of this tower, listen:

"We have in our hands three prisoners, who are three children. These children were adopted by one of your regiments, and they belong to you. We offer to surrender these three children to you.

"On one condition.

"It is, that we shall depart freely.

"If you refuse—listen well—you can only attack us in one of two ways: by the breach, on the side of the forest, or by the bridge, on the side of the plateau. The building on the bridge has three stories; in the lower story I, Imânus—I, who speak to you—have put six hogsheads of tar and a hundred fascines of dried heath; in the top story there is straw; in the middle story there are books and papers; the iron door which communicates between the bridge and the tower is closed, and Monseigneur carries the key; I have my-

self made a hole under the door, and through this hole passes a sulphur slow-match, one end of which is in the tar and the other within reach of my hand, inside the tower. I can fire it when I choose. If you refuse to let us go out, the three children will be placed in the second floor of the bridge, between the story where the sulphur-match touches the tar and the floor where the straw is, and the iron door will be shut on them. If you attack by the bridge, it will be you who set the building on fire; if you attack by the breach, it will be we; if you attack by the breach and the bridge at the same time, the fire will be kindled at the same instant by us both, and, in any case, the three children will perish.

"Now, accept or refuse.

"If you accept, we come out.

"If you refuse, the children die.

"I have spoken."

The man speaking from the top of the tower became silent.

A voice from below cried—

"We refuse."

This voice was abrupt and severe. Another voice, less harsh, though firm, added—

"We give you four-and-twenty hours to surrender at discretion."

There was a silence, then the same voice continued—"To-morrow, at this hour, if you have not surrendered, we commence the assault."

And the first voice resumed—"And then no quarter!"

To this savage voice another replied from the top of the tower. Between the two battlements a lofty figure bent forward, and in the starlight the stern face of the Marquis de Lantenac could be distinguished; his sombre glance shot down into the obscurity and seemed to look for some one; and he cried—

"Hold, it is thou, priest!"

"Yes, traitor; it is I," replied the stern voice from below.

CHAPTER XVII.

TERRIBLE AS THE ANTIQUE.

THE implacable voice was, in truth, that of Cimourdain; the younger and less imperative that of Gauvain.

The Marquis de Lantenac did not deceive himself in fancying that he recognized Cimourdain.

As we know, a few weeks in this district, made bloody by civil war, had rendered Cimourdain famous; there was no notoriety more darkly sinister than his; people said: Marat at Paris, Chalier at Lyons, Cimourdain in Vendée. They stripped the Abbé Cimourdain of all the respect which he had formerly commanded; that is the consequence of a priest's unfrocking himself. Cimourdain inspired horror. The severe are unfortunate; those who note their acts condemn them, though, perhaps, if their consciences could be seen, they would stand absolved. A Lyeurgus misunderstood appears a Tiberius. Those two men, the Marquis de Lantenac and the Abbé Cimourdain, were equally poised in the balance of hatred. The maledictions of the Royalists against Cimourdain made a counterpoise to the execrations of the Republicans against Lantenac. Each of these men was a monster to the opposing camp; so far did this equality go, that while Prieur of the Marne was setting a price on the head of Lantenac, Charette at Noirmoutiers set a price on the head of Cimourdain.

Let us add, these two men, the marquis and the priest, were up to a certain point the same man. The bronze mask of civil war has two profiles, the one turned toward the past, the other set toward the future, but both equally tragic. Lantenac was the first of these profiles, Cimourdain the second; only the bitter sneer of Lantenac was full of shadow and night, and on the fatal brow of Cimourdain shone a gleam from the morning.

And now the besieged of La Tourgue had a respite.

Thanks to the intervention of Gauvain, a sort of truce for twenty-four hours had been agreed upon.

Imânus had, indeed, been well informed; through the requisitions of Cimourdain, Gauvain had now four thousand five hundred men under his command, part national guards, part troops of the line; with these he had surrounded Lantenac in La Tourgue, and was able to level twelve cannon at the fortress: a masked battery of six pieces on the edge of the forest toward the tower, and an open battery of six on the plateau, toward the bridge.

He had succeeded in springing the mine and making a breach at the foot of the tower.

Thus, when the twenty-four hours' truce was ended, the attack would begin under these conditions:

On the plateau and in the forest were four thousand five hundred men.

In the tower, nineteen!

History might find the names of those besieged nineteen in the list of outlaws. We shall perhaps encounter them.

As commander of these four thousand five hundred men, which almost made an army, Cimourdain had wished Gauvain to allow himself to be made Adjutant-General. Gauvain refused, saying, "When

Lantenac is taken, we will see. As yet, I have merited nothing."

Those great commands, with low regimental rank, were, for that matter, a custom among the Republicans. Bonaparte was, after this, at the same time colonel of artillery and general-in-chief of the army of Italy.

The Tower Gauvain had a strange destiny: a Gauvain attacked, a Gauvain defended it. From that fact rose a certain reserve in the attack, but not in the defense, for Lantenac was a man who spared nothing; moreover, he had always lived at Versailles, and had no personal associations with La Tourgue, which he scarcely knew indeed. He had sought refuge there because he had no other asylum—that was all. He would have demolished it without scruple. Gauvain had more respect for the place.

The weak point of the fortress was the bridge, but in the library, which was on the bridge, were the family archives; if the assault took place on that side, the burning of the bridge would be inevitable; to burn the archives seemed to Gauvain like attacking his forefathers. La Tourgue was the ancestral dwelling of the Gauvains; in this tower centred all their fiefs of Brittany, just as all the fiefs of France centred in the tower of the Louvre; the home associations of Gauvain were there; he had been born within those walls; the tortuous fatalities of life forced him, a man, to attack this venerable pile which had sheltered him when a child. Could he be guilty of the impiety of reducing this dwelling to ashes? Perhaps his very cradle was stored in some corner of the granary above the library. Certain reflections are emotions. Gauvain felt himself moved in the presence of this ancient house of his family. That was why he had spared the bridge. He had

confined himself to making any sally or escape impossible by this outlet, and had guarded the bridge by a battery, and chosen the opposite side for the attack. Hence the mining and sapping at the foot of the tower.

Cimourdain had allowed him to take his own way; he reproached himself for it; his stern spirit revolted against all these Gothic relics, and he no more believed in pity for buildings than for men. Sparring a castle was a beginning of clemency. Now clemency was Gauvain's weak point. Cimourdain, as we have seen, watched him, drew him back from this, in his eyes, fatal weakness. Still he himself, though he felt a sort of rage in being forced to admit it to his soul, had not reseen La Tourgue without a secret shock; he felt himself softened at the sight of that study where were still the first books he had made Gauvain read. He had been the priest of the neighboring village, Parigné; he, Cimourdain, had dwelt in the attic of the bridge-castle; it was in the library that he had held Gauvain between his knees as a child and taught him to lisp out the alphabet; it was within those four old walls that he had seen grow this well-beloved pupil, the son of his soul, increase physically and strengthen in mind. This library, this small castle, these walls full of his blessings upon the child, was he about to overturn and burn them? He had shown them mercy. Not without remorse.

He had allowed Gauvain to open the siege from the opposite point. La Tourgue had its savage side, the tower, and its civilized side, the library. Cimourdain had allowed Gauvain to batter a breach in the savage side alone.

In truth, attacked by a Gauvain, defended by a Gauvain, this old dwelling returned in the height of the French Revolu-

tion to feudal customs. Wars between kinsmen make up the history of the Middle Ages: the Eteocles and Polynices are Gothic as well as Grecian, and Hamlet does at Elsinore what Orestes did in Argos.

CHAPTER XVIII.

POSSIBLE ESCAPE.

THE whole night was consumed in preparations on the one side and the other.

As soon as the sombre parley which we have just heard had ended, Gauvain's first act was to call his lieutenant.

Guéchamp, of whom it will be necessary to know somewhat, was a man of secondary order, honest, intrepid, mediocre, a better soldier than leader, rigorously intelligent up to the point where it ceases to be a duty to understand; never softened; inaccessible to corruption of any sort, whether of venality which corrupts the conscience, or of pity, which corrupts justice. He had on soul and heart those two shades—discipline and the countersign, as a horse has his blinkers on both eyes, and he walked unflinchingly in the space thus left visible to him. His way was straight, but narrow.

A man to be depended on; rigid in command, exact in obedience. Gauvain spoke rapidly to him.

"Guéchamp, a ladder."

"Commandant, we have none."

"One must be had."

"For scaling?"

"No; for escape."

Guéchamp reflected an instant, then answered: "I understand. But for what you want it must be very high."

"At least three stories."

"Yes, commandant, that is pretty nearly the height."

"It must even go beyond that, for we must be certain of success."

"Without doubt."

"How does it happen that you have no ladder?"

"Commandant, you did not think best to besiege La Tourgue by the plateau; you contented yourself with blockading it on this side; you wished to attack, not by the bridge, but the tower. So we only busied ourselves with the mine, and the escalade was given up. That is why we have no ladders."

"Have one made immediately."

"A ladder three stories high cannot be improvised."

"Have several short ladders joined together."

"One must have them in order to do that."

"Find them."

"There are none to be found. All through the country the peasants destroy the ladders, just as they break up the carts and cut the bridges."

"It is true; they try to paralyze the Republic."

"They want to manage so that we can neither transport baggage, cross a river, nor escalade a wall."

"Still, I must have a ladder."

"I just remember, commandant, at Javené, near Fougères, there is a large carpenter's shop. They might have one there."

"There is not a minute to lose."

"When do you want the ladder?"

"To-morrow at this hour, at the latest."

"I will send an express full speed to Javené. He can take a requisition. There is a post of cavalry at Javené which will

furnish an escort. The ladder can be here to-morrow before sunset."

"It is well; that will answer," said Gauvain; "act quickly—go."

Ten minutes after Guéchamp came back and said to Gauvain, "Commandant, the express has started for Javené."

Gauvain ascended the plateau and remained for a long time with his eyes fixed on the bridge-castle across the ravine. The gable of the building, without other means of access than the low entrance closed by the raising of the draw-bridge, faced the escarpment of the ravine. In order to reach the arches of the bridge from the plateau, it was necessary to descend this escarpment, a feat possible to accomplish by clinging to the brushwood. But once in the moat, the assailants would be exposed to all the projectiles that might rain from the three stories. Gauvain finished by convincing himself that, at the point which the siege had reached, the veritable attack ought to be by the breach of the tower.

He took every measure to render any escape out of the question; he increased the strictness of the investment; drew closer the ranks of his battalions, so that nothing could pass between. Gauvain and Cimourdain divided the investment of the fortress between them. Gauvain reserved the forest side for himself, and gave Cimourdain the side of the plateau. It was agreed that while Gauvain, seconded by Guéchamp, conducted the assault through the mine, Cimourdain should guard the bridge and ravine with every match of the open battery lighted.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHAT THE MARQUIS WAS DOING.

WHILE without every preparation for the attack was going on, within everything was preparing for resistance. It is not without a real analogy that a tower is called a "douve,"* and sometimes a tower is breached by a mine as a cask is bored by an auger. The wall opens like a bung-hole. This was what had happened at La Tourgue.

The great blast of two or three hundred-weight of powder had burst the mighty wall through and through. This breach started from the foot of the tower, traversed the wall in its thickest part, and made a sort of shapeless arch in the ground-floor of the fortress. On the outside the besiegers, in order to render this gap practicable for assault, had enlarged and finished it off by cannon-shots.

The ground-floor which this breach penetrated was a great round hall, entirely empty, with a central pillar which supported the keystone of the vaulted roof. This chamber, the largest in the whole keep, was not less than forty feet in diameter. Each story of the tower was composed of a similar room, but smaller, with guards to the embrasures of the loopholes. The ground-floor chamber had neither loopholes nor air-holes; there was about as much air and light as in a tomb.

The door of the dungeon, made more of iron than wood, was in this ground-floor room. Another door opened upon a staircase which led to the upper chambers. All the staircases were contrived in the interior of the wall.

It was into this lower room that the besiegers could arrive by the breach they

* Douve, a stave, a cask made of staves.—*Trans.*

had made. This hall taken, there would still be the tower to take.

It had always been impossible to breathe in that hall for any length of time. Nobody ever passed twenty-four hours there without suffocating. Now, thanks to the breach, one could exist there.

That was why the besieged had not closed the breach. Besides, of what service would it have been? The cannon would have re-opened it.

They stuck an iron torch-holder into the wall, and put a torch in it, which lighted the ground-floor.

Now how to defend themselves?

To wall up the hole would be easy, but useless. A retirade would be of more service. A retirade is an intrenchment with a re-entering angle; a sort of raftered barricade, which admits of converging the fire upon the assailants, and while leaving the breach open exteriorly, blocks it on the inside. Materials were not lacking. They constructed a retirade with fissures for the passage of the gun-barrels. The angle was supported by the central pillar; the wings touched the wall on either side. The marquis directed everything. Inspirer, commander, guide, and master—a terrible spirit.

Lantenac belonged to that race of warriors of the eighteenth century who, at eighty years, saved cities. He resembled that Count d'Alberg who, almost a centenarian, drove the King of Poland from Riga.

"Courage, friends," said the marquis; "at the commencement of this century, in 1713, at Bender, Charles XII., shut up in a house with three hundred Swedes, held his own against twenty thousand Turks."

They barricaded the two lower floors, fortified the chambers, battlemented the alcoves, supported the doors with joists

driven in by blows from a mallet; and thus formed a sort of buttress. It was necessary to leave free the spiral staircase which joined the different floors, for they must be able to get up and down, and to stop it against the besiegers would have been to close it against themselves. The defense of any place has thus always some weak side.

The marquis, indefatigable, robust as a young man, lifted beams, carried stones—set an example—put his hand to the work, commanded, aided, fraternized, laughed with this ferocious clan, but remained always the noble still—haughty, familiar, elegant, savage.

He permitted no reply to his orders. He had said: "If the half of you should revolt, I would have them shot by the other half, and defend the place with those that were left."

CHAPTER XX.

WHAT IMANUS WAS DOING.

WHILE the marquis occupied himself with the breach and the tower, Imânus was busy with the bridge. At the beginning of the siege, the escape-ladder which hung transversely below the windows of the second story had been removed by the marquis's orders, and Imânus had put it in the library. It was, perhaps, the loss of this ladder which Gauvain wished to supply. The windows of the lower floor, called the guard-room, were defended by a triple bracing of iron bars, set in the stone, so that neither ingress nor egress was possible by them. The library windows had no bars, but they were very

high. Imânus took three men with him, who, like himself, possessed capabilities and resolution that would carry them through anything. These men were Hoisnard, called Branche d'Or, and the two brothers Pique-en-Bois. Imânus, carrying a dark lantern, opened the iron door and carefully visited the three stories of the bridge-castle. Hoisnard, Branche d'Or, was implacable as Imânus, having had a brother killed by the Republicans.

Imânus examined the upper room, filled with hay and straw, and the ground-floor, where he had several fire-pots added to the tuns of tar; he placed the heap of fascines so that they touched the casks, and assured himself of the good condition of the sulphur-match, of which one end was in the bridge and the other in the tower. He spread over the floor, under the tuns and fascines, a pool of tar, in which he dipped the end of the sulphur-match. Then he brought into the library, between the ground-floor where the tar was and the garret filled with straw, the three cribs in which lay René-Jean, Gros-Alain, and Georgette, buried in deep sleep. They carried the cradles very gently in order not to awaken the little ones.

They were simple village cribs, a sort of low osier basket which set on the floor so that a child could get out unaided. Near each cradle Imânus placed a porringer of soup, with a wooden spoon. The escape-ladder, unhooked from its cramping-irons, had been set on the floor against the wall; Imânus arranged the three cribs, end to end, in front of the ladder. Then, thinking that a current of air might be useful, he opened wide the six windows of the library. The summer night was warm and starlight. He sent the brothers Pique-en-Bois to open the windows of the upper and lower stories. He had noticed on the eastern façade of

the building a great dried old ivy, the color of tinder, which covered one whole side of the bridge from top to bottom, and framed in the windows of the three stories. He thought this ivy might be left. Imânus took a last watchful glance at everything; that done, the four men left the châtelet and returned to the tower. Imânus double-locked the heavy iron door, studied attentively the enormous bolts, and nodded his head in a satisfied way at the sulphur-match which passed through the hole he had drilled, and was now the sole communication between the tower and the bridge. This train or wick started from the round chamber, passed beneath the iron door, entered under the arch, twisted like a snake down the spiral staircase leading to the lower story of the bridge, crept over the floor, and ended in the heap of dried fascines laid on the pool of tar. Imânus had calculated that it would take about a quarter of an hour for this wick, when lighted in the interior of the tower, to set fire to the pool of tar under the library. These arrangements all concluded, and every work carefully inspected, he carried the key of the iron door back to the marquis, who put it in his pocket. It was important that every movement of the besiegers should be watched. Imânus, with his cowherd's horn in his belt, posted himself as sentinel on the watch-tower of the platform at the top of the tower. While keeping a constant look-out, one eye on the forest, and one on the plateau, he worked at making cartridges, having near him, in the embrasure of the watch-tower window, a powder-horn, a canvas bag full of good-sized balls, and some old newspapers, which he tore up for wadding.

When the sun rose it lighted in the forest eight battalions, with sabres at

their sides, cartridge-boxes on their backs, and guns with fixed bayonets, ready for the assault; on the plateau, a battery, with caissons, cartridges, and boxes of case-shot; within the fortress, nineteen men loading several guns, muskets, blunderbusses and pistols—and three children sleeping in their cradles.

BOOK THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

THE MASSACRE OF SAINT BARTHOLOMEW.

THE children woke. The little girl was the first to open her eyes.

The waking of children is like the unclosing of flowers, a perfume seems to exhale from those fresh young souls. Georgette, twenty months old, the youngest of the three, who was still a nursing baby in the month of May, raised her little head, sat up in her cradle, looked at her feet, and began to chatter.

A ray of the morning fell across her crib; it would have been difficult to decide which was the rosier, Georgette's foot or Aurora.

The other two still slept—the slumber of boys is heavier. Georgette, gay and happy, began to chatter. René Jean's hair was brown, Gros Alain's was auburn, Georgette's blonde. These tints would change later in life. René Jean had the look of an infant Hercules; he slept lying on his stomach, with his two

fists in his eyes. Gros Alain had thrust his legs outside his little bed.

All three were in rags; the garments given them by the battalion of the Bonnet Rouge had worn to shreds; they had not even a shirt between them. The two boys were almost naked; Georgette was muffled in a rag which had once been a petticoat, but was now little more than a jacket. Who had taken care of these children? Impossible to say. Not a mother. These savage peasant fighters, who dragged them along from forest to forest, had given them their portion of soup. That was all. The little ones lived as they could. They had everybody for master, and nobody for father. But even about the rags of childhood there hangs a halo. These three tiny creatures were lovely.

Georgette prattled.

A bird sings—a child prattles—but it is the same hymn; hymn indistinct, inarticulate, but full of profound meaning. The child, unlike the bird, has the sombre destiny of humanity before it. This thought saddens any man who listens to the joyous song of a child. The most sublime psalm that can be heard on this earth is the lisping of a human soul from the lips of childhood. This confused murmur of thought, which is as yet only instinct, holds a strange, unreasoning appeal to eternal justice; perchance it is a protest against life while standing on its threshold; a protest unconscious, yet heartrending; this ignorance, smiling at infinity, lays upon all creation the burden of the destiny which shall be offered to this feeble, unarmed creature. If unhappiness comes, it seems like a betrayal of confidence.

The babble of an infant is more and less than speech; it is not measured, and yet it is a song; not syllables, and yet

a language; a murmur that began in heaven, and will not finish on earth; it commenced before human birth, and will continue in the sphere beyond! These lisplings are the echo of what the child said when he was an angel, and of what he will say when he enters eternity. The cradle has a Yesterday, just as the grave has a To-morrow; this morrow and this yesterday join their double mystery in that incomprehensible warbling, and there is no such proof of God, of eternity, and the duality of destiny, as in this awe-inspiring shadow flung across that flower-like soul.

There was nothing saddening in Georgette's prattle; her whole lovely face was a smile. Her mouth smiled, her eyes smiled, the dimples in her cheeks smiled. There was a serene acceptance of the morning in this smile. The soul has faith in the sunlight. The sky was blue, warm, beautiful. This frail creature, who knew nothing, who comprehended nothing, softly cradled in a dream which was not thought, felt herself in safety amidst the loveliness of nature, these sturdy trees, this pure verdure, this landscape fair and peaceful, with its noises of birds, brooks, insects, leaves, above which glowed the brightness of the sun.

After Georgette, René Jean, the eldest, who was past four, awoke. He sat up, jumped in a manly way over the side of his cradle, found out the porringer, considered that quite natural, and so sat down on the floor and began to eat his soup.

Georgette's prattle had not awakened Gros Alain, but at the sound of the spoon in the porringer, he turned over with a start, and opened his eyes. Gros Alain was the one of three years old. He saw his bowl. He had only to stretch out his arm and take it; so, without leaving his

bed, he followed René Jean's example, seized the spoon in his little fist, and began to eat, holding the bowl on his knees.

Georgette did not hear them; the modulations of her voice seemed measured by the cradling of a dream. Her great eyes, gazing upward, were divine. No matter how dark the ceiling in the vault above a child's head, Heaven is reflected in its eyes.

When René Jean had finished his portion, he scraped the bottom of the bowl with his spoon, sighed, and said with dignity, "I have eaten my soup."

This roused Georgette from her reverie.

"Thoup!" said she.

Seeing that René Jean had eaten, and that Gros Alain was eating, she took the porringer which was placed by her cradle, and began to eat in her turn, not without carrying the spoon to her ear much oftener than to her mouth.

From time to time she renounced civilization, and ate with her fingers.

When Gros Alain had scraped the bottom of his porringer too, he leaped out of bed and joined his brother.

CHAPTER II.

SUDDENLY from without, down below, on the side of the forest, came the stern, loud ring of a trumpet.

To this clarion-blast a horn from the top of the tower replied.

This time it was the clarion which called, and the horn which made answer.

The clarion blew a second summons, and the horn again replied.

Then from the edge of the forest rose a voice, distant but clear, which cried thus:

"Brigands, a summons! If at sunset you have not surrendered at discretion, we commence the attack."

A voice, which sounded like the roar of a wild animal, responded from the summit of the tower: "Attack!"

The voice from below resumed, "A cannon will be fired, as a last warning, half an hour before the assault."

The voice from on high repeated, "Attack!"

These voices did not reach the children, but the trumpet and the horn rose loud and clear. At the first sound of the clarion, Georgette lifted her head, and stopped eating; at the sound of the horn, she dropped her spoon into the porringer; at the second blast of the trumpet, she lifted the little forefinger of her right hand, and, raising and depressing it in turn, marked the cadences of the flourish which prolonged the blast. When the trumpet and the horn ceased, she remained with her finger pensively lifted, and murmured, in a half-voice, "Muthic."

We suppose that she wished to say, "Music."

The two elders, René Jean and Gros Alain, had paid no attention to the trumpet and horn; they were absorbed by something else; a wood-louse was just making a journey across the library-floor.

Gros Alain perceived it, and cried, "There is a little creature!"

René Jean ran up.

Gros Alain continued, "It pricks."

"Do not hurt it," said René Jean.

And both remained watching the traveler.

Georgette proceeded to finish her soup; that done, she looked about for her brothers. René Jean and Gros Alain were in the recess of one of the windows, gravely stooping over the wood-louse, their foreheads touching, their curls ming-

ling. They held their breath in wonder, and examined the insect, which had stopped, and did not attempt to move, though not appreciating the admiration it received.

Georgette, seeing that her brothers were watching something, must needs know what it was. It was not an easy matter to reach them—still she undertook the journey. The way was full of difficulties; there were things scattered over the floor. There were footstools overturned, heaps of old papers, packing-cases, forced open and empty; trunks, rubbish of all sorts, in and out of which it was necessary to sail—a whole archipelago of reefs—but Georgette risked it. The first task was to get out of her crib; then she entered the chain of reefs, twisted herself through the straits, pushed a footstool aside, crept between two coffers, got over a heap of papers, climbing up one side and rolling down the other, regardless of the exposure to her poor little naked legs, and succeeded in reaching what a sailor would have called an open sea, that is, a sufficiently wide space of the floor which was not littered over, and where there were no more perils; then she bounded forward, traversed this space, which was the whole width of the room, on all fours with the agility of a kitten, and got near to the window. There a fresh and formidable obstacle encountered her; the great ladder lying along the wall reached to this window, the end of it passing a little beyond the corner of the recess. It formed between Georgette and her brothers a sort of cape, which must be crossed. She stopped and meditated; her internal monologue ended, she came to a decision. She resolutely twisted her rosy fingers about one of the rungs, which were vertical, as the ladder lay along its side. She tried to raise herself on her feet, and fell

back ; she began again, and fell a second time ; the third effort was successful. Then, standing up, she caught hold of the rounds in succession, and walked the length of the ladder. When she reached the extremity there was nothing more to support her. She tottered, but seizing in her two hands the end of one of the great poles, which held the rungs, she rose again, doubled the promontory, looked at René Jean and Gros Alain, and began to laugh.

CHAPTER III.

AT that instant, René Jean, satisfied with the result of his investigations of the wood-louse, raised his head, and announced, “ ’Tis a she-creature.”

Georgette’s laughter made René Jean laugh, and René Jean’s laughter made Gros Alain laugh.

Georgette seated herself beside her brothers, the recess forming a sort of little reception chamber, but their guest, the wood-louse, had disappeared.

He had taken advantage of Georgette’s laughter to hide himself in a crack of the floor.

Other incidents followed the wood-louse’s visit.

First, a flock of swallows passed. They probably had their nests under the edge of the overhanging roof. They flew close to the window, a little startled by the sight of the children, describing great circles in the air, and uttering their melodious spring song. The sound made the three little ones look up, and the wood-louse was forgotten.

Georgette pointed her finger toward the swallows, and cried, “ Chicks ! ”

René Jean reprimanded her. “ Miss, you must not say ‘ chicks ; ’ they are birds.”

“ Birz,” repeated Georgette.

And all three sat and watched the swallows.

Then a bee entered. There is nothing so like a soul as a bee. It goes from flower to flower as a soul from star to star, and gathers honey as the soul does light.

This visitor made a great noise as it came in ; it buzzed at the top of its voice, seeming to say, “ I have come. I have first been to see the roses, now I come to see the children. What is going on here ? ”

A bee is a housewife — its song is a grumble. The children did not take their eyes off the new-comer as long as it staid with them.

The bee explored the library, rummaged in the corners, fluttered about with the air of being at home in a hive, and wandered, winged and melodious, from book-case to book-case, examining the titles of the volumes through the glass doors as if it had an intellect. Its exploration finished, it departed.

“ She is going to her own house,” said René Jean.

“ It is a beast,” said Gros Alain.

“ No,” replied René Jean, “ it is a fly.”

“ A f’y,” said Georgette.

Thereupon Gros Alain, who had just found on the floor a cord, with a knot in one end, took the opposite extremity between his thumb and forefinger, and made a sort of wind-mill of the string, watching its whirls with profound attention.

On her side, Georgette, having turned into a quadruped again, and recommenced her capricious course back and forward across the floor, discovered a venerable tapestry covered arm-chair, so eaten by moths that the horse-hair stuck out in

several places. She stopped before this seat. She enlarged the holes, and diligently pulled out the long hairs.

Suddenly she lifted one finger; that meant, "Listen!"

The two brothers turned their heads.

A vague, distant noise surged up from without; it was probably the attacking camp executing some strategic manœuvre in the forest; horses neighed, drums beat, caissons rolled, chains clanked, military calls and responses; a confusion of savage sounds, whose mingling formed a sort of harmony. The children listened in delight.

"It is the good God who does that," said René Jean.

CHAPTER IV.

THE noise ceased. René Jean remained lost in a dream.

How do ideas vanish and reform themselves in the brains of those little ones? What is the mysterious motive of those memories at once so troubled and so brief? There was in that sweet, pensive little soul a mingling of ideas of the good God, of prayer, of joined hands, the light of a tender smile it had formerly known and knew no longer, and René Jean murmured, half aloud, "Mamma!"

"Mamma!" repeated Gros Alain.

"Mamma!" cried Georgette.

Then René Jean began to leap. Seeing this, Gros Alain leaped too. Gros Alain repeated every movement and gesture of his brother. Three years copies four years, but twenty months keeps its independence. Georgette remained seated, uttering a word from time to time. Georgette could not yet manage sentences. She was a

thinker; she spoke in apothegms. She was monosyllabic.

Still, after a little, example proved infectious, and she ended by trying to imitate her brothers, and these three little pairs of naked feet began to dance, to run, to totter amidst the dust of the old polished oak floor, beneath the grave aspects of the marble busts toward which Georgette from time to time cast an unquiet glance, murmuring "Ma-mans."

Probably in Georgette's language this signified something which looked like a man, but yet which she comprehended was not one—perhaps the first glimmering of an idea in regard to phantoms.

Georgette, oscillating rather than walking, followed her brothers, but her favorite mode of locomotion was on all-fours.

Suddenly, René Jean, who had gone near a window, lifted his head, then dropped it, and hastened to hide himself in a corner of the wall made by the projecting window recess. He had just caught sight of a man looking at him. It was a soldier, from the encampment of Blues on the plateau, who, profiting by the truce, and perhaps infringing it a little, had ventured to the very edge of the escarpment, from whence the interior of the library was visible. Seeing René Jean hide himself, Gros Alain hid too; he crouched down beside his brother, and Georgette hurried to hide herself behind them. So they remained, silent, motionless, Georgette pressing her finger against her lips. After a few instants, René Jean ventured to thrust out his head; the soldier was there still. René Jean retreated quickly, and the three little ones dared not even breathe. This suspense lasted for some time. Finally the fear began to bore Georgette; she gathered courage to look out. The soldier had disappeared. They began again to run about and play. Gros

Alain, although the imitator and admirer of René Jean, had a specialty—that of discoveries. His brother and sister saw him suddenly galloping wildly about, dragging after him a little cart, which he had unearthed behind some box.

This doll's wagon had lain forgotten for years among the dust, living amicably in the neighborhood of the printed works of genius and the busts of sages. It was, perhaps, one of the toys that Gauvain had played with when a child.

Gros Alain had made a whip of his string, and cracked it loudly; he was very proud. Such are discoverers. The child discovers a little wagon, the man an America—the spirit of adventure is the same.

But it was necessary to share the god-send. René Jean wished to harness himself to the carriage, and Georgette wished to ride in it.

She succeeded in seating herself. René Jean was the horse. Gros Alain was the coachman. But the coachman did not understand his business; the horse began to teach him.

René Jean shouted, "Say, 'Whoa!'" "Whoa!" repeated Gros Alain.

The carriage upset. Georgette rolled out. Child-angels can shriek; Georgette did so.

Then she had a vague wish to weep.

"Miss," said René Jean, "you are too big."

"Me big!" stammered Georgette.

And her size consoled her for her fall.

The cornice of entablature outside the windows was very broad; the dust blowing from the plain of heath had collected there; the rains had hardened it into soil, the wind had brought seeds; a blackberry-bush had profited by the shallow bed to grow up there. This bush belonged to the species called fox blackberry. It

was August now, and the bush was covered with berries; a branch passed in by the window, and hung down nearly to the floor.

Gros Alain, after having discovered the cord and the wagon, discovered this bramble. He went up to it. He gathered a berry and ate.

"I am hungry," said René Jean.

Georgette arrived, galloping up on her hands and knees.

The three between them stripped the branch, and ate all the berries. They stained their faces and hands with the purple juice till the trio of little seraphs was changed into a knot of little fauns, which would have shocked Dante and charmed Virgil. They shrieked with laughter.

From time to time the thorns pricked their fingers. There is always a pain attached to every pleasure.

Georgette held out her finger to René Jean, on which showed a tiny drop of blood, and, pointing to the bush, said, "Picks."

Gros Alain, who had suffered also, looked suspiciously at the branch, and said, "It is a beast."

"No," replied René Jean; "it is a stick."

"Then a stick is wicked," retorted Gros Alain.

Again Georgette, though she had a mind to cry, burst out laughing.

CHAPTER V.

In the meantime René Jean, perhaps jealous of the discoveries made by his younger brother, had conceived a grand project. For some minutes past, while

busy eating the berries and pricking his fingers, his eyes turned frequently toward the chorister's desk, mounted on a pivot, and isolated like a monument in the centre of the library. On this desk lay the celebrated volume of Saint Bartholomew.

It was, in truth, a magnificent and priceless folio. It had been published at Cologne by the famous publisher of the edition of the Bible of 1682, Blœuw, or, in Latin, Cœsius.

It was printed, not on Dutch paper, but upon that beautiful Arabian paper so much admired by Edrisi, which was made of silk and cotton and never grew yellow; the binding was of gilt leather, and the clasps of silver, the boards of that parchment which the parchment sellers of Paris took an oath to buy at the Hall Saint Mathurin, "and nowhere else."

The volume was full of engravings on wood and copper, with geographical maps of many countries; it had on a fly-leaf a protest of the printers, paper-makers, and publishers, against the edict of 1635, which set a tax on "leather, fur, cloven-footed animals, sea-fish, and paper," and at the back of the frontispiece could be read a dedication to the Gryphes, who were to Lyons what the Elzevirs were to Amsterdam. These combinations resulted in a famous copy, almost as rare as the *Apostol* at Moscow.

The book was beautiful; it was for that reason René Jean looked at it, too long perhaps. The volume chanced to be open at a great print representing Saint Bartholomew carrying his skin over his arm. He could see this print where he stood. When the berries were all eaten, René Jean watched it with a feverish longing, and Georgette, following the direction of her brother's eyes, perceived the engraving, and said "Pic'sure."

This exclamation seemed to decide René

Jean. Then, to the utter stupefaction of Gros Alain, an extraordinary thing happened. A great oaken chair stood in one corner of the library; René Jean marched toward it, seized, and dragged it unaided up to the desk. Then he mounted thereon and laid his two hands on the volume.

Arrived at this summit, he felt a necessity for being magnificently generous; he took hold of the upper end of the "pic'sure" and tore it carefully down; the tear went diagonally over the saint, but that was not the fault of René Jean; it left in the book the left side, one eye and a bit of the halo of the old apocryphal evangelist: he offered Georgette the other half of the saint and all his skin. Georgette took the saint, and observed, "Mamans."

"And I!" cried Gros Alain.

The tearing of the first page of a book by children is like the shedding of the first drop of blood by men—it decides the carnage.

René Jean turned the leaf; next to the saint came the Commentator Pantœnus. René Jean bestowed Pantœnus upon Gros Alain.

Meanwhile Georgette tore her large piece into two little morsels, then the two into four, and continued her work till history might have noted that Saint Bartholomew, after having been flayed in Armenia, was torn limb from limb in Brittany.

CHAPTER VI.

The quartering completed, Georgette held out her hand to René Jean, and said, "More!"

After the saint and the commentator



THE MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

followed portraits of frowning glossarists. The first in the procession was Gavantus; René Jean tore him out and put Gavantus into Georgette's hand.

The whole group of Saint Bartholomew's commentators met the same fate in turn.

There is a sense of superiority in giving. René Jean kept **nothing** for himself. Gros Alain and Georgette were watching him; he was satisfied with that; the admiration of his public was reward enough.

René Jean, inexhaustible in his magnanimity, offered Fabricio Pignatelli to Gros Alain, and Father Stilting to Georgette; he followed these by the bestowal of Alphonse Tostat on Gros Alain, and Cornelius *a Lapide* upon Georgette. Then Gros Alain received Henry Hammond, and Georgette Father Roberti, together with a view of the city of Douai, where that father was born, in 1619. Gros Alain received the protest of the stationers, and Georgette obtained the dedication to the Gryphes. Then it was the turn of the maps. René Jean proceeded to distribute them. He gave Gros Alain Ethiopia, and Lycaonia fell to Georgette. This done he tumbled the book upon the floor.

This was a terrible moment. With mingled ecstasy and fright Gros Alain and Georgette saw René Jean wrinkle his brows, stiffen his legs, clench his fists, and push the massive folio off the stand. The majestic old tome was fairly a tragic spectacle. Pushed from its resting-place, it hung for an instant on the edge of the desk, seemed to hesitate, trying to balance itself, then crashed down, and broken, crumpled, torn, ripped from its binding, its clasps fractured, flattened itself miserably upon the floor. Fortunately it did not fall on the children. They were only bewildered, not crushed. Victories do not always finish so well.

Like all glories it made a great noise, and left a cloud of dust.

Having flung the book on the ground, René Jean descended from the chair.

There was a moment of silence and fright; victory has its terrors. The three children seized one another's hands and stood at a distance, looking toward the vast dismantled tome. But, after a brief reverie, Gros Alain approached it quickly and gave it a kick.

Nothing more was needed. The appetite for destruction grows rapidly. René Jean kicked it, Georgette dealt a blow with her little foot which overset her, though she fell in a sitting position, by which she profited to fling herself on Saint Bartholomew. The spell was completely broken. René Jean pounced upon the saint, Gros Alain dashed upon him, and joyous, distracted, triumphant, pitiless, tearing the prints, slashing the leaves, pulling out the markers, scratching the binding, ungluing the gilded leather, breaking off the nails from the silver corners, ruining the parchment, making mincemeat of the august text, working with feet, hands, nails, teeth; rosy, laughing, ferocious, the three angels of prey demolished the defenceless evangelist.

They annihilated Armenia, Judea, Ben-evento, where rest the relics of the saint; Nathanael, who is, perhaps, the same as Bartholomew, the Pope Gelasius, who declared the Gospel of St. Bartholomew apocryphal. Nathanael, all the portraits, all the maps, and the inexorable massacre of the old book, absorbed them so entirely that a mouse ran past without their perceiving it.

It was an extermination.

To tear in pieces history, legend, science, miracles, whether true or false, the Latin of the Church; superstitions, fanaticisms,

mysteries, to rend a whole religion from top to bottom, would be a work for three giants, but the three children completed it. Hours passed in the labor, but they reached the end; nothing remained of Saint Bartholomew.

When they had finished, when the last page was loosened, the last print lying on the ground, when nothing was left of the book but the edges of the text and pictures in the skeleton of the binding, René Jean sprang to his feet, looked at the floor covered with scattered leaves, and clapped his hands.

Gros Alain clapped his hands likewise.

Georgette took one of the pages in her hand, rose, leaned against the window-sill, which was on a level with her chin, and commenced to tear the great leaf into tiny bits, and scatter them out of the casement.

Seeing this, René Jean and Gros Alain began the same work. They picked up and tore into small bits, picked up again and tore, and flung the pieces out of the window, as Georgette had done, page by page; rent by these little desperate fingers, the entire ancient volume almost flew down the wind. Georgette thoughtfully watched these swarms of little white papers dispersed by the breeze, and said, "Butterflies!"

So the massacre ended with these tiny ghosts vanishing in the blue of heaven!

CHAPTER VII.

THUS was Saint Bartholomew for the second time made a martyr; he who had been the first time sacrificed in the year of our Lord 49.

Then the evening came on; the heat increased; there was sleep in the air; Georgette's eyes began to close; René Jean went to his crib, pulled out the straw sack which served instead of a mattress, dragged it to the window, stretched himself thereon, and said, "Let us go to bed."

Gros Alain laid his head against René Jean, Georgette placed hers on Gros Alain, and the three malefactors fell asleep.

The warm breeze entered by the open windows, the perfume of wild flowers from the ravines and hills mingled with the breath of evening; nature was calm and pitiful; everything beamed, was at peace, full of love. The sun gave its caress, which is light, to all creation; everywhere could be heard and felt that harmony which is thrown off from the infinite sweetness of inanimate things. There is a motherhood in the infinite; creation is a miracle in full bloom; she perfects her grandeur by her goodness. It seemed as if one could feel some invisible Being take those mysterious precautions which, in the formidable conflict of opposing elements of life, protect the weak against the strong; at the same time there was beauty everywhere: the splendor equaled the gentleness. The landscape that seemed asleep had those lovely hazy effects which the changings of light and shadow produce on the fields and rivers; the mists mounted toward the clouds like reveries changing into dreams; the birds circled noisily about La Tourgue; the swallows looked in through the windows, as if they wished to be certain that the children slept well. They were prettily grouped upon one another, motionless, half-naked, posed like little Cupids; they were adorable and pure; the united ages of the three did not make nine years;

they were dreaming dreams of paradise, which were reflected on their lips in vague smiles. Perchance God whispered in their ears; they were of those whom all human languages call the weak and blessed; they were made majestic by innocence. All was silence about them, as if the breath from their tender bosoms were the care of the universe, and listened to by the whole creation; the leaves did not rustle; the grass did not stir. It seemed as if the vast starry world held its breath for fear of disturbing these three humble angelic sleepers, and nothing could have been so sublime as that reverent respect of nature in presence of this littleness.

The sun was near its setting; it almost touched the horizon. Suddenly, across this profound peace burst a lightning-like glare, which came from the forest; then a savage noise. A cannon had just been fired. The echoes seized upon this thundering, and repeated it with an infernal din. The prolonged growling from hill to hill was terrible. It woke Georgette.

She raised her head slightly, lifted her little finger, and said, "Boom!"

The noise died away; the silence swept back; Georgette laid her head on Gros Alain, and fell asleep once more.

BOOK THE THIRD.

THE MOTHER.

CHAPTER I.

DEATH PASSES.

WHEN this evening came, the mother whom we saw wandering almost at ran-

dom had walked the whole day. This was indeed the history of all her days—to go straight before her without stopping. For her slumbers of exhaustion, given in to in any corner that chanced to be nearest, were no more rest than the morsels she ate here and there, as the birds pick up crumbs, were nourishment. She ate and slept just what was absolutely necessary to keep her from falling down dead.

She had passed the previous night in an empty barn; civil wars leave many such. She had found in a bare field four walls, an open door, a little straw beneath the ruins of a roof, and she had slept on the straw under the rafters, feeling the rats slip about beneath, and watching the stars rise through the gaping wreck above. She slept for several hours, then she woke in the middle of the night and set out again, in order to get over as much road as possible before the great heat of the day should set in. For any one who travels on foot in the summer midnight is more fitting than noon.

She had followed to the best of her ability the brief itinerary the peasant of Vautorles had marked out for her; she had gone as straight as possible toward the west. Had there been any one near, he might have heard her ceaselessly murmur, half aloud, "La Tourgue." Except the names of her children, this word was all she knew.

As she walked, she dreamed. She thought of the adventures with which she had met; she thought of all she had suffered, all which she had accepted; of the meetings, the indignities, the terms offered; the bargains proposed and submitted to, now for a shelter, now for a morsel of bread, sometimes simply to obtain from some one information as to her route. A wretched woman is more unfortunate than a wretched man. Fright-

ful wandering march! But nothing mattered to her, provided she could discover her children.

Her first encounter this day had been a village; the dawn was beginning to break. Everything was still tinged with the gloom of night; a few doors were already half open in the principal streets, and curious faces looked out of the windows. The inhabitants were agitated like a disturbed bee-hive. This arose from a noise of wheels and chains which had been heard.

On the church square, a frightened group, with their heads raised, watched something descend a high hill along the road toward the village. It was a four-wheeled wagon, drawn by five horses, harnessed with chains. On this wagon could be distinguished a heap like a pile of long joists, in the middle of which lay some shapeless object, covered with a large canvas, resembling a pall. Ten horsemen rode in front of the wagon, and ten others behind. These men wore three-cornered hats, and above their shoulders rose what seemed to be the points of naked sabres. This whole cortège, advancing slowly, showed black and distinct against the horizon. The wagon looked black; the harness looked black; the horsemen looked black. Behind them gleamed the pallor of the morning.

They entered the village and moved toward the square. Daylight had come on while the wagon was going down the hill, and the cortège could be distinctly seen; it was like watching a procession of shadows, for not a man in the party uttered a word.

The horsemen were gendarmes; they did in truth carry drawn sabres. The covering was black.

The wretched wandering mother entered the village from the opposite side, and approached the mob of peasants at the

moment the gendarmes and the wagon reached the square. Among the crowd voices whispered questions and replies.

"What is it?"

"The Guillotine."

"Whence does it come?"

"From Fougères."

"Where is it going?"

"I do not know. They say to a castle in the neighborhood of Parigué."

"Parigué."

"Let it go where it likes, provided it does not stop here."

This great cart with its lading hidden by a sort of shroud, this team, these gendarmes, the noise of the chains, the silence of the men, the gray dawn, all made up a whole that was spectral. The group traversed the square and passed out of the village. The hamlet lay in a hollow between two hills. At the end of a quarter of an hour, the peasants, who had stood still as if petrified, saw the lugubrious procession reappear on the summit of the western hill. The heavy wheels jolted along the ruts, the chains clanked in the morning wind, the sabres shone in the rising sun; then the road turned off, and the cortège disappeared.

It was the very moment when Georgette woke in the library by the side of her still sleeping brothers, and wished her rosy feet good-morning.

CHAPTER II.

DEATH SPEAKS.

THE mother watched this mysterious procession, but neither comprehended nor sought to understand; her eyes were busy

with another vision—her children, lost amidst the darkness.

She went out of the village also, a little after the cortège which had filed past, and followed the same route at some distance behind the second squad of gendarmes. Suddenly the word “guillotine” recurred to her. “Guillotine!” she said to herself. This rude peasant, Michelle Fléchard, did not know what that was, but instinct warned her; she shivered, without being able to tell wherefore; it seemed horrible to her to walk behind this thing, and she turned to the left, quitted the high-road, and passed into a wood, which was the forest of Fougères.

After wandering for some time, she perceived a belfry and some roofs; it was one of the villages scattered along the edge of the forest. She went toward it. She was hungry.

It was one of the villages in which the Republicans had established military posts.

She passed on to the square in front of the mayoralty house. In this village there was also fright and anxiety. A crowd pressed up to the flight of steps which led to the mansion. On the top step stood a man, escorted by soldiers; he held in his hand a great open placard. At his right was stationed a drummer, at his left a bill-sticker, carrying a paste-pot and brush.

Upon the balcony over the door appeared the mayor, wearing a tri-colored scarf over his peasant dress.

The man with the placard was a public crier. He wore his shoulder-belt, with a small wallet hanging from it, a sign that he was going from village to village, and had something to publish throughout the district.

At the moment Michelle Fléchard approached, he had unfolded the placard,

and was beginning to read. He read, in a loud voice:

“THE FRENCH REPUBLIC—ONE AND INDIVISIBLE.”

The drum beat. There was a sort of movement among the assembly. A few took off their caps; others pulled their hats closer over their heads. At that time, and in that country, one could almost recognize the political opinions of a man by his head-gear; hats were Royalist, caps Republican. The confused murmur of voices ceased; everybody listened; the crier read:

“In virtue of the orders we have received, and the authority delegated to us by the Committee of Public Safety—”

The drum beat the second time. The crier continued:

“And in execution of the decree of the National Convention, which puts beyond the law all rebels taken with arms in their hands, and which ordains capital punishment to whomsoever shall give them shelter, or help them to escape—”

A peasant asked, in a low voice, of his neighbor, “What is that—capital punishment?”

His neighbor replied, “I do not know.”

The crier fluttered the placard.

“In accordance with Article 17th of the law of April 30th, which gives full power to delegates and sub-delegates against rebels, we declare outlaws—”

He made a pause, and resumed—

“The individuals known under the names and surnames which follow—”

The whole assemblage listened intently.

The crier’s voice sounded like thunder.

He read:

“Lantenac, brigand.”

“That is monseigneur,” murmured a peasant. And through the whole crowd went the whisper, “It is monseigneur.”

The crier resumed :

"Lantenac, ci-devant marquis, brigand ; Imânus, brigand—"

Two peasants glanced sideways at each other. "That is Gouge-le-Bruant."
"Yes ; it is Bris-Bleu."

The crier continued to read the list :
"Grand Francœur, brigand—"

The assembly murmured, "He is a priest. Yes ; the Abbé Turmeau. Yes ; he is curé somewhere in the neighborhood of the wood of Chapelle." "And brigand," said a man in a cap.

The crier read : "Boisnouveau, brigand ; the two brothers, Pique-en-Bois, brigands ; Houzard, brigand—"

"That is Monsieur de Quelen," said a peasant.

"Panier, brigand—"

"That is Monsieur Sepher."

"Place Nette, brigand—"

"That is Monsieur Jamois."

The crier continued his reading without noticing these commentaries :

"Guinoiseau, brigand ; Chatenay, styled Robi, brigand—"

A peasant whispered, "Guinoiseau is the same as Le Blond ; Chatenay is from Saint Ouen."

"Hoisnard, brigand," pursued the crier.

Among the crowd could be heard, "He is from Ruillé." "Yes ; it is Branche d'Or." "His brother was killed in the attack on Pontorson." "Yes ; Hoisnard Malonnière." "A fine young chap of nineteen."

"Attention !" said the crier. "Listen to the last of the list :

"Belle Vigue, brigand ; La Musette, brigand ; Sabretout, brigand ; Brin d'Amour, brigand—"

A lad pushed the elbow of a young girl. The girl smiled.

The crier continued, "Chante-en-hiver, brigand ; Le Chat, brigand—"

A peasant said, "That is Moulard."

"Tabouze, brigand—"

Another peasant said, "That is Gauffre."

"There are two of the Gauffres," added a woman.

"Both good fellows," grumbled a lad.

The crier shook the placard, and the drum beat.

The crier resumed his reading : "The above-named, in whatsoever place taken, and their identity established, shall be immediately put to death."

There was a movement among the crowd.

The crier went on : "Any one affording them shelter, or aiding their escape, will be brought before a court-martial and put to death. Signed—"

The silence grew profound.

"Signed : The Delegate of the Committee of Public Safety, Cimourdain."

"A priest," said a peasant.

"The former curé of Parigné," said another.

A townsman added, "Turmeau and Cimourdain. A Blue priest and a White."

"Both black," said another townsman.

The mayor, who was on the balcony, lifted his hat, and cried, "Long live the Republic !"

A roll of the drum announced that the crier had not finished.

He was making a sign with his hand. "Attention !" said he. "Listen to the last four lines of the Government proclamation. They are signed by the Chief of the exploring column of the North Coasts, Commandant Gauvain."

"Listen !" exclaimed the voices of the crowd.

And the crier read :

"Under pain of death—"

All were silent.

"It is forbidden, in pursuance of the

above order, to give aid or succor to the nineteen rebels above named, at this time shut up and surrounded in La Tourgue."

"What?" cried a voice.

It was the voice of a woman; of the mother.

CHAPTER III.

MUTTERINGS AMONG THE PEASANTS.

MICHELLE FLÉCHARD had mingled with the crowd. She had listened to nothing, but one hears certain things without listening. She caught the words La Tourgue. She raised her head.

"What?" she repeated. "La Tourgue!"

People stared at her. She appeared out of her mind. She was in rags.

Voices murmured, "She looks like a brigand."

A peasant woman, who carried a basket of buckwheat biscuits, drew near, and said to her in a low voice, "Hold your tongue!"

Michelle Fléchard gazed stupidly at the woman. Again she understood nothing. The name La Tourgue had passed through her mind like a flash of lightning, and the darkness closed anew behind it. Had she not a right to ask information? What had she done that they should stare at her in this way?

But the drum had beat for the last time; the bill-sticker posted up the placard; the mayor retired into the house; the crier set out for some other village, and the mob dispersed.

A group remained before the placard; Michelle Fléchard joined this knot of people.

They were commenting on the names of the men declared outlaws. There were peasants and townsmen among them; that is to say, Whites and Blues.

A peasant said: "After all, they have not caught everybody. Nineteen are only nineteen. They have not got Rion, they have not got Benjamin Mouline, nor Goupil of the parish of Andouillé."

"Nor Lorieul of Monjean," said another. Others added, "Nor Brice Denys."

"Nor François Dudonet."

"Yes, of Laval."

"Nor Huet of Launey Villiers."

"Nor Grégis."

"Nor Pilon."

"Nor Filleul."

"Nor Ménicent."

"Nor Guéharrée."

"Nor the three brothers Logerais."

"Nor Monsieur Lechandelier de Pierre-ville."

"Idiots!" said a stern-faced white-haired old man. "They have all if they have Lantenac."

"They have not got him yet," murmured one of the young men.

The old man added: "Lantenac taken, the soul is taken. Lantenac dead, La Vendée is slain."

"Who, then, is this Lantenac?" asked a townsman.

A townsman replied, "He is a ci-devant."

Another added, "He is one of those who shoot women."

Michelle Fléchard heard and said, "It is true."

They turned toward her.

She went on: "For he shot me."

It was a strange speech; it was like hearing a living woman declare herself dead. People began to look at her a little suspiciously.

She was indeed a startling object;

trembling at everything, scared, quaking, showing a sort of wild-animal trouble, so frightened that she was frightful. There is always something terrible in the feebleness of a despairing woman. She is a creature who has reached the furthest limits of destiny. But peasants have not a habit of noticing details. One of them muttered, "She might easily be a spy."

"Hold your tongue and get away from here," the good woman who had already spoken to her said in a low tone.

Michelle Flécharde replied: "I am doing no harm. I am looking for my children."

The good woman glanced at those who were staring at Michelle, touched her forehead with one finger and winked, saying, "She is a simpleton."

Then she took her aside and gave her a biscuit.

Michelle Flécharde, without thanking her, began to eat greedily.

"Yes," said the peasants, "she eats like an animal—she is an idiot."

So the tail of the mob dwindled away. They all went away, one after another.

When Michelle Flécharde had devoured her biscuit, she said to the peasant woman, "Good! I have eaten. Now, where is La Tourgue?"

"It is taking her again!" cried the peasant.

"I must go to La Tourgue! Show me the way to La Tourgue!"

"Never!" exclaimed the peasant. "Do you want to get yourself killed, eh? Besides, I don't know. Oh, see here! You are really crazy! Listen, poor woman, you look tired. Will you come to my house and rest yourself?"

"I never rest," said the mother.

"And her feet are torn to pieces!" murmured the peasant.

Michelle Flécharde resumed: "Don't I tell you that they have stolen my chil-

dren? A little girl and two boys. I come from the carnichot in the forest. You can ask Tellemarch the Caimand about me. And the man I met in the field down yonder. It was the Caimand who cured me. It seems I had something broken. All that is what happened to me. Then there is Sergeant Radoub besides. You can ask him. He will tell thee. Why, he was the one we met in the wood. Three! I tell you three children! Even the oldest one's name—René Jean—I can prove all that. The other's name is Gros Alain, and the little girl's is Georgette. My husband is dead. They killed him. He was the farmer at Sis-coignard. You look like a good woman. Show me the road! I am not crazy—I am a mother! I have lost my children! I am trying to find them. That is all. I don't know exactly which way I have come. I slept last night in a barn on the straw. La Tourgue, that is where I am going. I am not a thief. You must see that I am telling the truth. You ought to help me find my children. I do not belong to the neighborhood. I was shot, but I do not know where."

The peasant shook her head, and said, "Listen, traveler. In times of revolution you mustn't say things that cannot be understood; you may get yourself taken up in that way."

"But La Tourgue!" cried the mother. "Madame, for the love of the Child Jesus and the Blessed Virgin up in Paradise, I beg you, madame, I entreat you, I conjure you, tell me which way I must go to get to La Tourgue!"

The peasant woman went into a passion.

"I do not know! And if I knew I would not tell! It is a bad place. People do not go there."

"But I am going," said the mother.

And she set forth again. The woman

watched her depart, muttering, "Still, she must have something to eat."

She ran after Michelle Fléchard and put a roll of black bread in her hand.

"There is for your supper."

Michelle Fléchard took the buckwheat bread, did not answer, did not turn her head, but walked on.

She went out of the village. As she reached the last houses she met three ragged, barefooted little children. She approached them, and said, "These are two girls and a boy."

Noticing that they looked at the bread she gave it to them.

The children took the bread, then grew frightened.

She plunged into the forest.

CHAPTER IV.

A MISTAKE.

ON the same morning, before the dawn appeared, this happened amidst the obscurity of the forest, along the cross-road which goes from Javené to Lécousse.

All the roads of the Breage are between high banks, but of all the routes that leading from Javené to Parigué by the way of Lécousse is the most deeply imbedded. Besides that, it is winding. It is a ravine rather than a road. This road comes from Vitré, and had the honor of jolting Madame de Sévigné's carriage. It is inclosed to the right and left by hedges. There could be no better place for an ambush.

On this morning, an hour before Michelle Fléchard from another point of the forest reached the first village where she had

seen the sepulchral apparition of the wagon escorted by gendarmes, a crowd of men filled the copses where the Javené road crosses the bridge over the Couesnon. The branches hid them. These men were peasants, all wearing jackets of skins which the kings of Brittany wore in the sixteenth century and the peasants in the eighteenth. The men were armed, some with guns, others with axes. Those who carried axes had just prepared in an open space a sort of pyre of dried fagots and billets which only remained to be set on fire. Those who had guns were stationed at the two sides of the road in watchful positions. Anybody who could have looked through the leaves would have seen everywhere fingers on triggers and guns aimed toward the openings left by the interlacing branches. These men were on the watch. All the guns converged toward the road, which the first gleams of day had begun to whiten.

In this twilight low voices held converse.

"Are you sure of that?"

"Well, they say so."

"She is about to pass?"

"They say she is in the neighborhood."

"She must not go out."

"She must be burned."

"We are three villages who have come out for that."

"Yes; but the escort?"

"The escort will be killed."

"But will she pass by this road?"

"They say so."

"Then she comes from Vitré?"

"Why not?"

"But somebody said she was coming from Fougères."

"Whether she comes from Fougères or Vitré she comes from the devil."

"Yes."

"And must go back to him."

"Yes."

"So she is going to Parigué?"

"It appears so."

"She will not go."

"No."

"No, no, no!"

"Attention."

It became prudent now to be silent, for the day was breaking.

Suddenly these ambushed men held their breath; they caught a sound of wheels and horses' feet. They peered through the branches, and could perceive indistinctly a long wagon, an escort on horseback, and something on the wagon, coming toward them along the high-banked road.

"There she is," said one, who appeared to be the leader.

"Yes," said one of the scouts; "with the escort."

"How many men?"

"Twelve."

"We were told they were twenty."

"Twelve or twenty, *we* must kill the whole."

"Wait till they get within sure aim."

A little later, the wagon and its escort appeared at a turn in the road.

"Long live the king!" cried the chief peasant.

A hundred guns were fired at the same instant.

When the smoke scattered, the escort was scattered also. Seven horsemen had fallen; five had fled. The peasants rushed up to the wagon.

"Hold!" cried the chief; "it is not the guillotine! It is a ladder."

A long ladder was, in fact, all the wagon carried.

The two horses had fallen wounded; the driver had been killed, but not intentionally.

"All the same," said the chief; "a ladder with an escort looks suspicious. It

was going toward Parigué. It was for the escalade of La Tourgue, very sure."

"Let us burn the ladder!" cried the peasants.

And they burned the ladder.

As for the funereal wagon for which they had been waiting, it was pursuing another road, and was already two leagues off, in the village where Michelle Fléchard saw it pass at sunrise.

CHAPTER V.

VOX IN DESERTO.

WHEN Michelle Fléchard left the three children to whom she had given her bread, she took her way at random through the wood.

Since nobody would point out the road, she must find it out for herself. Now and then she sat down, then rose, then re-seated herself again. She was borne down by that terrible fatigue which first attacks the muscles, then passes into the bones—weariness like that of a slave. She was a slave in truth. The slave of her lost children. She must find them; each instant that elapsed might be to their hurt; whoso has a duty like this woman's has no rights; it is forbidden even to stop to take breath. But she was very tired. In the extreme of exhaustion which she had reached, another step became a question. Can one make it? She had walked all the day, encountering no other village, not even a house. She took first the right path, then a wrong one, ending by losing herself amidst leafy labyrinths, resembling one another precisely. Was she approaching her goal? Was

she nearing the term of her Passion? She was in the Via Dolorosa, and felt the overwhelming of the last station.* Was she about to fall in the road, and die there? There came a moment when to advance farther seemed impossible to her. The sun was declining, the forest growing dark; the paths were hidden beneath the grass, and she was helpless. She had nothing left but God. She began to call; no voice answered.

She looked about; she perceived an opening in the branches, turned in that direction, and found herself suddenly on the edge of the wood.

She had before her a valley, narrow as a trench, at the bottom of which a clear streamlet ran along over the stones. She discovered then she was burning with thirst. She went down to the stream, knelt by it, and drank.

She took advantage of her kneeling position to say her prayers.

When she rose she tried to decide upon a course. She crossed the brook.

Beyond the little valley stretched, as far as the eye could reach, a plateau, covered with short underbrush, which, starting from the brook, ascended in an inclined plain, and filled the whole horizon. The forest had been a solitude; this plain was a desert. Behind every bush of the forest she might meet some one; on the plateau, as far as she could see, nothing met her gaze. A few birds, which seemed frightened, were flying away over the heath.

Then, in the midst of this awful abandonment, feeling her knees give way under her, and, as if gone suddenly mad, the distracted mother flung forth this

strange cry into the silence: "Is there any one here?"

She waited for an answer. It came. A low, deep voice burst forth; it proceeded from the verge of the horizon, was borne forward from echo to echo; it was either a peal of thunder or a cannon, and it seemed as if the voice replied to the mother's question, and that it said, "Yes."

Then the silence closed in anew.

The mother rose, animated with fresh life; there was some one; it seemed to her as if she had now some person with whom she could speak. She had just drank and prayed; her strength came back; she began to ascend the plateau in the direction whence she had heard that vast and far-off voice.

Suddenly she saw a lofty tower start up on the extreme edge of the horizon. It was the only object visible amidst the savage landscape; a ray from the setting sun crimsoned its summit. It was more than a league away. Behind the tower spread a great sweep of scattered verdure lost in the mist—it was the forest of Fougères.

This tower appeared to her to be the point whence came the thundering which had sounded like a summons in her ear. Was it that which had given the answer to her cry?

Michelle Fléchard reached the top of the plateau; she had nothing but the plain before her.

She walked toward the Tower.

* In reference to the pictures in Roman Catholic churches. The last station is that wherein our Lord falls under the weight of the cross.—*Trans.*

CHAPTER VI.

THE SITUATION.

THE moment had come. The inexorable held the pitiless. Cimourdain had Lantenac in his hand.

The old Royalist rebel was taken in his form; it was evident that he could not escape, and Cimourdain meant that the marquis should be beheaded here—upon his own territory—his own lands—on this very spot—in sight of his ancestral dwelling-place, that the feudal stronghold might see the head of the feudal lord fall, and the example thus be made memorable.

It was with this intention that he had sent to Fougères for the guillotine which we lately saw upon its road.

To kill Lantenac was to slay the Vendée; to slay the Vendée was to save France. Cimourdain did not hesitate. The conscience of this man was quiet; he was urged to ferocity by a sense of duty.

The marquis appeared lost; as far as that went Cimourdain was tranquil, but there was a consideration which troubled him. The struggle must inevitably be a terrible one. Gauvain would direct it, and perhaps would wish to take part; this young chief was a soldier at heart; he was just the man to fling himself into the thick of this pugilistic combat. If he should be killed? Gauvain—his child! The unique affection he possessed on earth! So far fortune had protected the youth, but fortune might grow weary. Cimourdain trembled. His strange destiny had placed him here between these two Gauvains, for one of whom he wished death; for the other life.

The cannon-shot which had roused Georgette in her cradle and summoned

the mother in the depths of her solitude, had done more than that. Either by accident, or owing to the intention of the man who fired the piece, the ball, although only meant as a warning, had struck the guard of iron bars which protected the great loop-hole of the first floor of the tower, broken, and half wrenched it away. The besieged had not had time to repair this damage.

The besieged had been boastful, but they had very little ammunition. Their situation, indeed, was much more critical than the besiegers supposed. If they had had powder enough they would have blown up La Tourgue when they and the enemy should be together within it; this had been their dream; but their reserves were exhausted. They had not more than thirty charges left for each man. They had plenty of guns, blunderbusses, and pistols, but few cartridges. They had loaded all the weapons in order to keep up a steady fire—but how long could this steady firing last? They must lavishly exhaust the resources which they required to husband. That was the difficulty. Fortunately (sinister fortune) the struggle would be mostly man to man; sabre and poniard would be more needed than fire-arms. The conflict would be rather a duel with knives than a battle with guns. This was the hope of the besieged.

The interior of the tower seemed impregnable. In the lower hall, which the mine had breached, the retirade so skillfully constructed guarded the entrance. Behind the retirade was a long table covered with loaded weapons, blunderbusses, carbines, and muskets; sabres, axes, and poniards. Since they had no powder to blow up the tower, the crypt of the oubliettes could not be utilized, therefore the marquis had closed the door of the dungeon. Above the ground-floor

hall was the round chamber which could only be reached by the narrow, winding staircase. This chamber, in which there also set a table covered with loaded weapons ready to the hand, was lighted by the great loop-hole, the grating of which had just been broken by the cannon-ball. From this chamber the spiral staircase ascended to the circular room on the second floor, in which was the iron door communicating with the bridge castle. This chamber was called indifferently the room with the iron door, or the mirror-room, from numerous small looking-glasses hung to rusty old nails on the naked stones of the wall—a fantastic mingling of elegance and savage desolation.

Since the apartments on the upper floor could not be successfully defended, this mirror-room became what Manesson Mallet, the lawgiver in regard to fortified places, calls “the last post where the besieged can capitulate.” The struggle, as we have already said, would be to keep the assailants from reaching this room.

This second-floor round chamber was lighted by loop-holes, still a torch burned there. This torch, in an iron holder like the one in the hall below, had been kindled by Imânus, and the end of the sulphur-match placed near it. Terrible carefulness!

At the end of the ground-floor hall was a board placed upon trestles, which held food, like the arrangement in a Homeric cavern; great dishes of rice, porridge of black grain, hashed veal, biscuits, stewed fruit, and jugs of cider. Whoever wished could eat and drink.

The cannon-shot set them all on the watch. Not more than a half-hour of quiet remained to them.

From the top of the tower Imânus watched the approach of the besiegers. Lantenac had ordered his men not to fire

as the assailants came forward. He said, “They are four thousand five hundred. To kill outside is useless. When they try to enter, we are as strong as they.”

Then he laughed, and added, “Equality, Fraternity.”

It had been agreed that Imânus should sound a warning on his horn when the enemy began to advance.

The little troop, posted behind the retired or on the stairs, waited with one hand on their muskets, the other on their rosaries.

This was what the situation had resolved itself into:

For the assailants a breach to mount, a barricade to force, three rooms, one above the other, to take in succession by main strength, two winding staircases to be carried step by step under a storm of bullets; for the besieged—to die.

CHAPTER VII.

PRELIMINARIES.

GAUVAIN on his side arranged the order of attack. He gave his last instructions to Cimourdain, whose part in the action, it will be remembered, was to guard the plateau, and to Guéchamp, who was to wait with the main body of the army in the forest camp. It was understood that neither the masked battery of the wood nor the open battery of the plateau would fire unless there should be a sortie or an attempt at escape on the part of the besieged. Gauvain had reserved for himself the command of the storming column. It was that which troubled Cimourdain.

The sun had just set.

A tower in an open country resembles a

ship in open sea. It must be attacked in the same manner. It is a boarding rather than an assault. No cannon. Nothing useless attempted. What would be the good of cannonading walls fifteen feet thick? A port-hole; men forcing it on the one side, men guarding it on the other; axes, knives, pistols, fists, and teeth—that is the undertaking. Gauvain felt that there was no other way of carrying La Tourgue. Nothing can be more murderous than a conflict so close that the combatants look into one another's eyes. He had lived in this tower when a child, and knew its formidable recesses by heart.

He meditated profoundly. A few paces from him his lieutenant, Guéchamp, stood with a spy-glass in his hand, examining the horizon in the direction of Parigué. Suddenly he cried, "Ah! at last!"

This exclamation aroused Gauvain from his reverie.

"What is it, Guéchamp?"

"Commandant, the ladder is coming."

"The escape-ladder?"

"Yes."

"How? It has not yet got here?"

"No, commandant. And I was troubled. The express that I sent to Javené came back."

"I know it."

"He told me that he had found at the carpenter's shop in Javené a ladder of the requisite dimensions—he took it—he had it put on a cart, he demanded an escort of twelve horsemen, and he saw them set out from Parigué—the cart, the escort, and the ladder. Then he rode back full speed, and made his report. And he added, that the horses being good and the departure having taken place about two o'clock in the morning, the wagon would be here before sunset."

"I know all that. Well?"

"Well, commandant, the sun has just

set, and the wagon which brings the ladder has not yet arrived."

"Is it possible? Still we must commence the attack. The hour has come. If we were to wait, the besieged would think we hesitated."

"Commandant, the attack can commence."

"But the escape-ladder is necessary."

"Without doubt."

"But we have not got it."

"We have it."

"How?"

"It was that made me say, 'Ah! at last!' The wagon did not arrive; I took my telescope and examined the route from Parigué to La Tourgue, and, commandant, I am satisfied. The wagon and the escort are coming down yonder; they are descending a hill. You can see them."

Gauvain took the glass and looked. "Yes; there it is. There is not light enough to distinguish very clearly. But I can see the escort—it is certainly that. Only the escort appears to me more numerous than you said, Guéchamp."

"And to me also."

"They are about a quarter of a league off."

"Commandant, the escape-ladder will be here in a quarter of an hour."

"We can attack."

It was indeed a wagon which they saw approaching, but not the one they believed. As Gauvain turned, he saw Sergeant Radoub standing behind him, upright, his eyes downcast, in the attitude of military salute.

"What is it, Sergeant Radoub?"

"Citizen commandant, we, the men of the Battalion of the Bonnet Rouge, have a favor to ask of you."

"What?"

"To have us killed."

"Ah!" said Gauvain.

"Will you have that kindness?"

"But—that is according to circumstances," said Gauvain.

"Listen, commandant. Since the affair of Dol, you are careful of us. We are still twelve."

"Well?"

"That humiliates us."

"You are the reserve."

"We would rather be the advance-guard."

"But I need you to decide success at the close of the engagement. I keep you back for that."

"Too much."

"No. You are in the column. You march."

"In the rear. Paris has a right to march in front."

"I will think of it, Sergeant Radoub."

"Think of it to-day, my commandant. There is an opportunity. There are going to be hard blows to give or to take. It will be lively. La Tourgue will burn the fingers of those that touch her. We demand the favor of being in the party."

The sergeant paused, twisted his mustache, and added, in an altered voice, "Besides, look you, my commandant, our little ones are in this tower. Our children are there—the children of the battalion—our three children. That abominable beast called Bris-blue and Imânus, this Gouge-le-Bruant, this Bouge-le-Gruant, this Fouge-le-Truant, this thunder-clap of the devil, threatens our children. Our children are puppets, commandant. If all the earthquakes should mix in the business, we cannot have any misfortune happen to them. Do you hear that—authority? We will have none of it. A little while ago I took advantage of the truce, and mounted the plateau, and looked at them through a window—yes, they are certainly there—you can see

them from the edge of the ravine. I did see them, and they were afraid of me, the darlings. My commandant, if a single hair of their little cherub pates should fall, I swear by the thousand names of everything sacred, I, Sergeant Radoub, that I will have revenge out of somebody. And that is what all the battalion say; either we want the babies saved or we want to be all killed. It is our right—yes—all killed. And now, salute and respect."

Gauvain held out his hand to Radoub, and said, "You are brave men. You shall have a place in the attacking column. I will divide you into two parties. I will put six of you in the vanguard to make sure that the troops advance, and six in the rear-guard to make sure that nobody retreats."

"Will I command the twelve, as usual?"

"Certainly."

"Then, my commandant, thanks. For I am of the vanguard."

Radoub made another military salute, and went back to his company. Gauvain drew out his watch, spoke a few words in Guéchamp's ear, and the storming column began to form.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAST OFFER.

Now, Cimourdain, who had not yet gone to his post on the plateau, approached a trumpeter.

"Demand a parley," said he.

The clarion sounded; the horn replied. Again the trumpet and the horn exchanged a blast.

"What does that mean?" Gauvain asked Guéchamp. "What is it Cimourdain wants?"

Cimourdain advanced toward the tower, holding a white handkerchief in his hand.

He spoke in a loud voice: "Men who are in the tower, do you know me?"

A voice—the voice of Imânus—replied from the summit, "Yes."

The following dialogue between the two voices reached the ears of those about.

"I am the Envoy of the Republic."

"You are the ancient Curé of Parigué."

"I am the delegate of the Committee of Public Safety."

"You are a priest."

"I am the representative of the law."

"You are a renegade."

"I am the commissioner of the Revolution."

"You are an apostate."

"I am Cimourdain."

"You are the demon."

"Do you know me?"

"We hate you."

"Would you be content if you had me in your power?"

"We are here eighteen, who would give our heads to have yours."

"Very well; I come to deliver myself up to you."

From the top of the tower rang a burst of savage laughter, and this cry—"Come!"

The camp waited in the breathless silence of expectancy.

Cimourdain resumed, "On one condition."

"What?"

"Listen."

"Speak."

"You hate me?"

"Yes."

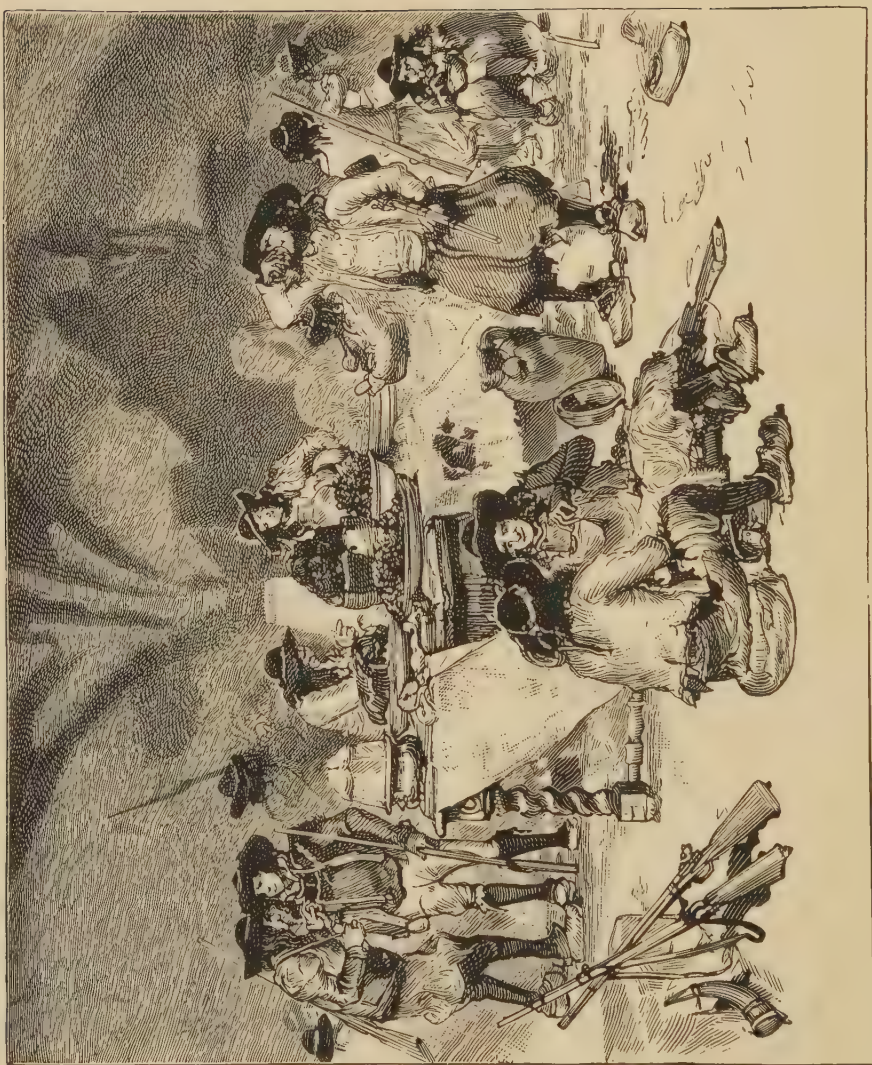
"And I love you. I am your brother."

The voice from the top of the tower replied—"Yes, Cain."

Cimourdain went on in a singular tone, at once loud and sweet: "Insult me; but listen. I come here under a flag of truce. Yes, you are my brothers. You are poor mistaken creatures. I am your friend. I am the light, and I speak to ignorance. Light is always brotherhood. Besides, have we not all the same mother—our country? Well, listen to me: you will know hereafter, or your children will know, or your children's children will know that what is done in this moment is brought about by the law above, and that the Revolution is the work of God. While awaiting the time when all consciences, even yours, shall understand this; when all fanaticisms, even yours, shall vanish; while waiting for this great light to spread, will no one have pity on your darkness? I come to you; I offer you my head; I do more. I hold out my hand to you. I demand of you the favor to destroy me in order to save yourselves. I have unlimited authority, and that which I say I can do. This is a supreme instant. I make a last effort. Yes, he who speaks to you is a citizen, and in this citizen—yes—there is a priest. The citizen defies you, but the priest implores you. Listen to me. Many among you have wives and children. I am defending your children and your wives—defending them against yourselves. Oh, my brothers—"

"Go on! Preach!" sneered Imânus.

"My brothers, do not let the terrible horn sound. Throats are to be cut. Many among us who are here before you will not see to-morrow's sun; yes, many of us will perish, and you—you all are going to die. Show mercy to yourselves. Why shed all this blood, when it is useless? Why kill so many men, when it would suffice to kill two?"



WHOEVER WISHED COULD EAT AND DRINK.

"Two?" repeated Imânus.

"Yes. Two."

"Who?"

"Lantenac and myself."

Cimourdain spoke more loudly. "Two men are too many. Lantenac for us; I for you. This is what I propose to you, and you will all have your lives safe. Give us Lantenac, and take me. Lantenac will be guillotined, and you shall do what you choose with me."

"Priest," howled Imânus, "if we had thee we would roast thee at a slow fire!"

"I consent," said Cimourdain.

He went on: "You, the condemned who are in this tower, you can all in an hour be living, and free. I bring you safety. Do you accept?"

Imânus burst forth: "You are not only a villain, you are a madman. Ah! there, why do you come here to disturb us? Who begged you to come and speak to us? We give up monseigneur? What is it you want?"

"His head. And I offer—"

"Your skin. Oh, we would flay you like a dog, Curé Cimourdain! Well, no; your skin is not worth his head. Get away with you."

"The massacre will be horrible. For the last time—reflect."

Night had come on during this strange colloquy, which could be heard without and within the tower. The Marquis de Lantenac kept silence, and allowed events to take their course. Leaders possess such sinister egotism; it is one of the rights of responsibility.

Imânus no longer addressed himself to Cimourdain; he shouted, "Men who attack us, we have submitted our propositions to you—they are settled—we have nothing to change in them. Accept them, else—woe to all! Do you consent? We will give you up the three children,

and you will allow liberty and life to us all."

"To all, yes," replied Cimourdain, "except one."

"And that?"

"Lantenac."

"Monseigneur! Give up monseigneur? Never!"

"We can only treat with you on that condition."

"Then begin."

Silence fell. Imânus descended after having sounded the signal on his horn; the marquis took his sword in his hand; the nineteen besieged grouped themselves in silence behind the retirade of the lower hall and sank upon their knees. They could hear the measured tread of the column as it advanced toward the tower in the gloom. The sound came nearer. Suddenly they heard it close to them, at the very mouth of the breach. Then all, kneeling, aimed their guns and blunderbusses across the openings of the barricade, and one of them—Grand-Francoeur, who was the priest Turmeau—raised himself, with a naked sabre in his right hand and a crucifix in his left, saying in a solemn voice, "In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost!"

All fired at the same time, and the battle began.

CHAPTER IX.

TITANS AGAINST GIANTS.

THE encounter was frightful. This hand-to-hand contest went beyond the power of fancy in its awfulness. To find anything similar it would be necessary to go back to the great duels of

Æschylus, or the ancient feudal butcheries, to "those attacks with short arms" which lasted down to the seventeenth century, when men penetrated into fortified places by concealed breaches; tragic assaults, where, says the old sergeant of the province of Alentigo, "when the mines had done their work, the besiegers advanced bearing planks covered with sheets of tin, and armed with round shields, and furnished with grenades, they forced those who held the intrenchments, or retirades, to abandon them, and thus become masters, they vigorously drove in the besieged."

The place of attack was terrible; it was what in military language is called "a covered breach"—that is to say, a crevasse traversing the wall through and through, and not an extended fracture open to the day. The powder had acted like an auger. The effect of the explosion had been so violent that the tower was cracked for more than forty feet above the chamber of the mine, but this was only a crack; the practicable rent which served as a breach, and gave admittance into the lower hall, resembled a thrust from a lance, which pierces, rather than a blow from an axe, which gashes. It was a puncture in the flank of the tower; a long cut, something like the mouth of a well, a passage, twisting and mounting like an intestine along the wall fifteen feet in thickness; a misshapen cylinder, encumbered with obstacles, traps, stones broken by the explosion, where any one entering struck his head against the granite rock, his feet against the rubbish, while the darkness blinded him.

The assailants saw before them this black gap, the mouth of a gulf, which had for upper and lower jaws all the stones of the jagged wall; a shark's mouth has not more teeth than had this frightful open-

ing. It was necessary to enter this gap and to get out of it.

Within was the wall; without rose the retirade. Without—that is to say, in the hall of the ground-floor.

The encounters of sappers in covered galleries when the counter-mine succeeds in cutting the mine, the butcheries in the gun-decks of vessels boarded in a naval engagement, alone have this ferocity. To fight in the bottom of a grave—it is the supreme degree of horror. It is frightful for men to meet in the death-struggle in such narrow bounds. At the instant when the first rush of besiegers entered, the whole retirade blazed with lightnings—it was like a thunder-bolt bursting underground. The thunder of the assailants replied to that of the ambuscade. The detonations answered one another; Gauvain's voice was heard shouting, "Break them in!" Then Lantenac's cry, "Hold firm against the enemy!" Then Imânus's yell, "Here, you men of the Main!" Then the clash of sabres clashing against sabres, and echo after echo of terrible discharges that killed right and left. The torch fastened against the wall dimly lighted the horrible scene. It was impossible clearly to distinguish anything; the combatants struggled amidst a lurid night; whoever entered was suddenly struck deaf and blind; deafened by the noise, blinded by the smoke.

The combatants trod upon the corpses; they lacerated the wounds of the injured men lying helpless amidst the rubbish; stamped recklessly upon limbs already broken; the sufferers uttered awful groans; the dying fastened their teeth in the feet of their unconscious tormentors. Then for an instant would come a silence more dreadful than the tumult. The foes collared each other; the hissing sound of their breath could be heard; the gnashing

of teeth, death groans, curses; then the thunder would recommence. A stream of blood flowed out from the tower through the breach and spread away across the darkness, and formed smoking pools upon the grass. One might have said that giantess, the tower, had been wounded, and was bleeding.

Strange thing, scarcely a sound of the struggle could be heard without. The night was very black, and a sort of funereal calm reigned in plain and forest about the beleaguered fortress. Hell was within, the sepulchre without. This shock of men exterminating one another amidst the darkness, these musket volleys, these clamors, these shouts of rage, all that din expired beneath that mass of walls and arches; air was lacking, and suffocation added itself to the carnage. Scarcely a sound reached those outside the tower. The little children slept.

The desperate strife grew madder. The retirade held firm. Nothing more difficult than to force a barricade with a re-entering angle. If the besieged had numbers against them, they had at least the position in their favor. The storming-column lost many men. Stretched in a long line outside the tower, it forced its way slowly in through the opening of the breach like a snake twisting itself into its den.

Gauvain, with the natural imprudence of a youthful leader, was in the hall in the thickest of the *mêlée*, with the bullets flying in every direction about his head. Besides the imprudence of his age, he had the assurance of a man who has never been wounded.

As he turned about to give an order, the glare of a volley of musketry lighted up a face close beside him.

"Cimourdain!" he cried. "What are you doing here?"

It was indeed Cimourdain. He replied, "I have come to be near you."

"But you will be killed!"

"Very well—you—what are you doing, then?"

"I am necessary here; you are not."

"Since you are here, I must be here too."

"No, my master."

"Yes, my child!"

And Cimourdain remained near Gauvain:

The dead lay in heaps on the pavement of the hall. Although the retirade was not yet carried, numbers would evidently conquer at last. The assailants were sheltered, and the assailed under cover; ten besiegers fell to one among the besieged, but the besiegers were constantly renewed. The assailants increased, and the assailed grew less.

The nineteen besieged were all behind the retirade, because the attack was made there. They had dead and wounded among them. Not more than fifteen could fight now. One of the most furious, Chante-en-hiver, had been horribly mutilated. He was a stubby, woolly-haired Breton; little and active. He had an eye gouged out, and his jaw broken. He could walk still. He dragged himself up the spiral staircase, and reached the chamber of the first floor, hoping to be able to say a prayer there and die. He backed himself against the wall near the loop-hole in order to breathe a little fresh air.

Beneath, in front of the barricade, the butchery became more and more horrible. In a pause between the answering discharges, Cimourdain raised his voice. "Besieged!" cried he. "Why let any more blood flow? You are beaten. Surrender! Think—we are four thousand five hundred men against nineteen—that is

to say, more than two hundred against one. Surrender!"

"Let us put a stop to those hypocritical babblings," retorted the Marquis de Lantenac.

And twenty balls answered Cimourdain.

The retirade did not reach to the arched roof; this space permitted the besieged to fire upon the barricade, but it also gave the besiegers an opportunity to scale it.

"Assault the retirade!" cried Gauvain. "Is there any man willing to scale the retirade?"

"I!" said Sergeant Radoub.

CHAPTER X.

RADOUB.

THEN a sort of stupor seized the assailants. Radoub had entered the breach at the head of the column, and of those men of the Parisian battalion of which he made the sixth, four had already fallen. After he had uttered that shout—"I!" he was seen to recoil instead of advance. Stooped, bent forward, almost creeping between the legs of the combatants, he regained the opening of the breach and rushed out. Was it a flight? A man like this to fly! What did it mean?

When he was outside, Radoub, still blinded by the smoke, rubbed his eyes as if to clear them from the horror of the cavernous night he had just left, and studied the wall of the tower by the starlight. He nodded his head, as if to say, "I was not mistaken."

Radoub had noticed that the deep crack made by the explosion of the mine ex-

tended above the breach to the loophole of the upper story, whose iron grating had been shattered, and by a ball. The network of broken bars hung loosely down, so that a man could enter.

A man could enter, but could he climb up? By the crevice it might have been possible for a cat to mount. That was what Radoub was. He belonged to the race which Pindar calls "the agile athletes." One may be an old soldier and a young man. Radoub, who had belonged to the French guards, was not yet forty. He was a nimble Hercules.

Radoub threw his musket on the ground, took off his shoulder-belts, laid aside his coat and jacket, guarding his two pistols, which he thrust in his trowsers'-belt, and his naked sabre, which he held between his teeth. The butt-ends of the pistols protruded above his belt.

Thus lightened of everything useless, and followed in the obscurity by the eyes of all such of the attacking column as had not yet entered the breach, he began to climb the stones of the cracked wall as if they had been the steps of a staircase. Having no shoes was an advantage—nothing can cling like a naked foot—he twisted his toes into the holes of the stones. He hoisted himself with his fists, and bore his weight on his knees. The ascent was a hazardous one; it was somewhat like climbing along the teeth of a gigantic saw. "Luckily," thought he, "there is nobody in the chamber of the first story, else I should not be allowed to climb up like this."

He had not more than forty feet left to mount. He was somewhat encumbered by the projecting butt-ends of his pistols, and as he climbed the crevice narrowed, rendering the ascent more and more difficult, so that the danger of falling increased as he went on.

At last he reached the frame of the loop-hole and pushed aside the twisted and broken grating, so that he had space enough to pass through. He raised himself for a last powerful effort, rested his knee on the cornice of the ledge, seized with one hand a bar of the grating at the left, with the other a bar at the right, lifted half his body in front of the embrasure of the loop-hole, and, sabre between his teeth, hung thus suspended by his two fists over the abyss.

It only needed one spring more to land him in the chamber of the first floor.

But a face appeared in the opening. Radoub saw a frightful spectacle rise suddenly before him in the gloom; an eye torn out, a jaw fractured, a bloody mask.

This mask, which had only one eye left, was watching him.

This mask had two hands: these two hands thrust themselves out of the darkness of this loop-hole and clutched at Radoub; one of them seized the two pistols in his belt, the other snatched the sword from between his teeth.

Radoub was disarmed. His knee slipped upon the inclined plane of the cornice; his two fists, cramped about the bars of the grating, barely sufficed to support him, and beneath was a sheer descent of forty feet.

This mask and these hands belonged to Chante-en-hiver.

Suffocated by the smoke which rose from the room below, Chante-en-hiver had succeeded in entering the embrasure of the loop-hole: the air from without had revived him; the freshness of the night had congealed the blood, and his strength had in a measure come back. Suddenly he perceived the torso of Radoub rise in front of the embrasure. Radoub, having his hands twisted about the bars, had no choice but to let himself fall or allow himself to be

disarmed; so Chante-en-hiver, with a horrible tranquillity, had taken the two pistols out of his belt and the sabre from between his teeth.

Then commenced an unheard-of duel—a duel between the disarmed and the wounded. Evidently the dying man had the victory in his own hands. A single shot would suffice to hurl Radoub into the yawning gulf beneath his feet.

Luckily for Radoub, Chante-en-hiver held both pistols in the same hand, so that he could not fire either, and was forced to make use of the sabre. He struck Radoub a blow on the shoulder with the point. The sabre-stroke wounded Radoub, but saved his life.

The soldier was unarmed, but in full possession of his strength. Regardless of his wound, which indeed was only a flesh-cut, he swung his body vigorously forward, loosed his hold of the bars, and bounded through the loop-hole.

There he found himself face to face with Chante-en-hiver, who had thrown the sabre behind him and was clutching a pistol in either hand.

Chante-en-hiver had Radoub close to the muzzle as he took aim upon his knees, but his enfeebled arm trembled, and he did not fire at once.

Radoub took advantage of this respite to burst out laughing. "I say, ugly-face!" cried he, "do you suppose you frighten me with your bloody bullock's jaws? Thunder and Mars, how they have shattered your features!"

Chante-en-hiver took aim.

Radoub continued: "It is not polite to mention it, but the grape-shop has dotted your mug very neatly. Bellona has disturbed your physiognomy, my lad. Come, come; spit out your little pistol-shot, my good fellow!"

Chante-en-hiver fired; the ball passed

so close to Radoub's head that it carried away part of his ear. His foe raised the second pistol in his other hand, but Radoub did not give him time to take aim.

"It is enough to lose one ear!" cried he. "You have wounded me twice. It is my turn now."

He flung himself on Chante-en-hiver, knocked aside his arm with such force that the pistol went off and the ball whizzed against the ceiling. He seized his enemy's broken jaw in both hands and twisted it about. Chante-en-hiver uttered a howl of pain and fainted. Radoub stepped across his body and left him lying in the embrasure of the loop-hole.

"Now that I have announced my ultimatum, don't you stir again," said he. "Lie there, you ugly crawling snake. You may fancy that I am not going to amuse myself massacring you. Crawl about on the ground at your ease—under foot is the place for you. Die—you can't get rid of that. In a little while you will learn what nonsense your priest has talked to you. Away with you into the great mystery, peasant!" And he hurried forward into the room.

"One can not see an inch before one's nose," grumbled he.

Chante-en-hiver began to writhe convulsively upon the floor and utter fresh moans of agony. Radoub turned back.

"Hold your tongue! Do me the favor to be silent, citizen, without knowing it. I can not trouble myself further with you. I should scorn to make an end of you. Just let me have quiet."

Then he thrust his hands into his hair as he stood watching Chante-en-hiver.

"But here, what am I to do now? It is all very fine, but I am disarmed. I had two shots to fire, and you have robbed me of them, animal. And with all that, a smoke that would blind a dog!"

Then his hand touched his wounded ear. "Aïe!" he said.

Then he went on: "You have gained a great deal by confiscating one of my ears! However, I would rather have one less of them than anything else—an ear is only an ornament. You have scratched my shoulder, too; but that is nothing. Expire, villager—I forgive you."

He listened. The din from the lower room was fearful. The combat had grown more furious than ever.

"Things are going well down there," he muttered. "How they howl 'Live the king!' One must admit that they die bravely."

His foot struck against the sabre. He picked it up, and said to Chante-en-hiver, who no longer stirred, and who might indeed be dead—"See here, man of the woods, I will take my sabre; you have left me that, any way. But I needed my pistols. The devil fly away with you, savage! Oh, there, what am I to do! I am no good whatever here."

He advanced into the hall trying to guide his steps in the gloom. Suddenly, in the shadow behind the central pillar, he perceived a long table upon which something gleamed faintly. He felt the objects. They were blunderbusses, carbines, pistols—a whole row of fire-arms laid out in order to his hand; it was the reserve of weapons the besieged had provided in this chamber, which would be their second place of stand.

"A whole arsenal!" cried Radoub.

And he clutched them right and left, dizzy with joy. Thus armed, he became formidable. He could see back of the table the door of the staircase, which communicated with the rooms above and below, standing wide open. Radoub seized two pistols, and fired them at random through the door-way; then he

snatched a blunderbuss, and fired that; then a gun, loaded with buckshot, and discharged it. The tromblon, vomiting forth its fifteen balls, sounded like a volley of grape-shot. He got his breath back, and shouted down the staircase, in a voice of thunder, "Live Paris!"

Then seizing a second blunderbuss, still bigger than the first, he aimed it toward the staircase and waited.

The confusion in the lower hall was indescribable. This unexpected attack from behind paralyzed the besieged with astonishment. Two balls from Radoub's triple fire had taken effect; one had killed the elder of the brothers Pique-en-Bois, the other had killed De Quilen, nicknamed Houzard.

"They are on the floor above!" cried the marquis.

At this cry the men abandoned the retirade; a flock of birds could not have fled more quickly; they plunged madly toward the staircase. The marquis encouraged the flight.

"Quick, quick!" he exclaimed. "There is most courage now in escape. Let us all get up to the second floor. We will begin again there." He left the retirade the last. This brave act saved his life.

Radoub, ambushed at the top of the stairs, watched the retreat, finger on trigger. The first who appeared at the turn of the spiral steps received the discharge of his gun full in their faces, and fell. Had the marquis been among them, he would have been killed.

Before Radoub had time to seize another weapon, the others passed him; the marquis behind all the rest, and moving more slowly.

Believing the first-floor chambers filled with the besiegers, the men did not pause there, but rushed on and gained the room above, which was the hall of the mirrors.

There was the iron door; there was the sulphur-match; it was there they must capitulate or die.

Gauvain had been as much astounded as the besieged by the detonations from the staircase, and was unable to understand how aid could have reached him in that quarter; but he took advantage without waiting to comprehend. He leaped over the retirade, followed by his men, and pursued the fugitives up to the first floor. There he found Radoub.

The sergeant saluted, and said: "One minute, my commandant. I did that. I remembered Dol. I followed your plan. I took the enemy between two fires."

"A good scholar," answered Gauvain, with a smile.

After one has been a certain length of time in the darkness, the eyes become accustomed to the obscurity like those of a night-bird. Gauvain perceived that Radoub was covered with blood.

"But you are wounded, comrade!" he exclaimed.

"Never mind that, my commandant! What difference does it make—an ear more or less! I got a sabre thrust, too, but it is nothing. One always cuts one's self a little in breaking a window. It is only losing a little blood."

The besiegers made a halt in the first-floor chamber, which had been conquered by Radoub. A lantern was brought. Cimourdain rejoined Gauvain. They held a council. It was time to reflect, indeed. The besiegers were not in the secrets of their foes; they were unaware of the lack of munitions; they did not know that the defenders of the tower were short of powder; that the second floor must be the last post where a stand could be made; the assailants could not tell but the staircase might be mined.

One thing was certain, the enemy could

not escape. Those who had not been killed were as safe as if under lock and key. Lantenac was in the trap.

Certain of this, the besiegers could afford to give themselves time to choose the best means of bringing about the end. Numbers among them had been killed already. The thing now was to spare the men as much as possible in this last assault. The risk of this final attack would be great. The first fire would without doubt be a hot one.

The combat was interrupted. The besiegers, masters of the ground and first floors, waited the orders of the commander-in-chief to renew the conflict. Gauvain and Cimourdain were holding counsel. Radoub assisted in silence at their deliberation. At length he timidly hazarded another military salute.

"My commandant!"

"What is it, Radoub?"

"Have I a right to a little recompense?"

"Yes, indeed. Ask what you like."

"I ask permission to mount the first."

It was impossible to refuse him; indeed, he would have done it without permission.

CHAPTER XI.

DESPERATE.

WHILE this consultation took place on the first floor, the besieged were barricading the second. Success is a fury; defeat is a madness. The encounter between the foes would be frenzied. To be close on victory intoxicates. The men below were inspired by hope, which would be the most powerful of human incentives

if despair did not exist. Despair was above. A calm, cold, sinister despair.

When the besiegers reached the hall of refuge, beyond which they had no resource, no hope, their first care had been to bar the entrance. To lock the door was useless; it was necessary to block the staircase. In a position like theirs, an obstacle across which they could see, and over which they could fight, was worth more than a closed door.

The torch which Imânus had planted in the wall near the sulphur-match lighted the room.

There was in the chamber one of those great, heavy oak chests, which were used to hold clothes and linen before the invention of chests of drawers.

They dragged this chest out, and stood it on end in the door-way of the staircase. It fitted solidly and closed the entrance, leaving open at the top a narrow space by which a man could pass; but it was scarcely probable that the assailants would run the risk of being killed one after another by any attempt to pass the barrier in single file.

This obstruction of the entrance afforded them a respite. They numbered their company. Out of the nineteen, only seven remained, of whom Imânus made one. With the exception of Imânus and the marquis, they were all wounded.

The five wounded men (active still, for in the heat of combat any wound less than mortal leaves a man able to move about) were Chatenay, called Robi; Guinoiseau, Hoisnard Blanche d'Or, Brind'Amour, and Grand-Francœur. All the others were dead.

They had no munitions left. The cartridge-boxes were almost empty; they counted. How many shots were there left for the seven to fire? Four.

They had reached the pass where noth-

ing remained but to fall. They had retreated to the precipice; it yawned black and terrible; they stood upon the very edge.

Still the attack was about to recommence—slowly, and all the more surely on that account. They could hear the butt-end of the muskets sound along the staircase step by step, as the besiegers advanced.

No means of escape. By the library? On the plateau bristled six cannons, with every match lighted. By the upper chambers? To what end? They gaze on the platform. The only resource when that was reached would be to fling themselves from the top of the tower.

The seven survivors of this Homeric band found themselves inexorably inclosed and held fast by that thick wall which at once protected and betrayed them. They were not yet taken, but they were already prisoners.

The marquis spoke: "My friends, all is finished."

Then, after a silence, he added, "Grand-Francœur, become again the Abbé Turmeau."

All knelt, rosary in hand. The measured stroke of the muskets sounded nearer.

Grand-Francœur, covered with blood from a wound which had grazed his skull, and torn away his leather cap, raised the crucifix in his right hand. The marquis, a skeptic at bottom, bent his knee to the ground.

"Let each one confess his faults aloud," said Grand-Francœur. "Monseigneur, speak."

The marquis answered, "I have killed."

"I have killed," said Hoisnard.

"I have killed," said Guinoiseau.

"I have killed," said Brin d'Amour.

"I have killed," said Chatenay.

"I have killed," said Imânus.

And Grand-Francœur replied: "In the name of the most Holy Trinity I absolve you. May your souls depart in peace!"

"Amen," replied all the voices.

The marquis raised himself. "Now let us die," he said.

"And kill," added Imânus.

The blows from the butt-end of the besiegers' muskets began to shake the chest which barred the door.

"Think of God," said the priest; "earth no longer exists for you."

"It is true," replied the marquis; "we are in the tomb."

All bowed their heads and smote their breasts. The marquis and the priest were alone standing. The priest prayed, keeping his eyes cast down; the peasants prayed; the marquis reflected. The coffer echoed dismally, as if under the stroke of hammers.

At this instant a rapid, strong voice sounded suddenly behind them, exclaiming—

"Did I not tell you so, monseigneur?"

All turned their heads in stupefied wonder. A gap had just opened in the wall.

A stone, perfectly fitted into the others, but not cemented, and having a pivot above and a pivot below, had just revolved like a turnstile, leaving the wall open. The stone having revolved on its axis, the opening was double, and offered two means of exit, one to the right and one to the left, narrow, but leaving space enough to allow a man to pass. Beyond this door, so unexpectedly opened, could be seen the first steps of a spiral staircase.

A face appeared in the opening. The marquis recognized Halmalo.

CHAPTER XII.

DELIVERANCE.

"Is it you, Halmalo?"

"It is I, monseigneur. You see there are stones that turn; they really exist; you can get out of here. I am just in time; but come quickly. In ten minutes you will be in the heart of the forest."

"God is great," said the priest.

"Save yourself, monseigneur!" cried the men in concert.

"All of you go first," said the marquis.

"You must go first, monseigneur," returned the Abbé Turmeau. "I go the last."

And the marquis added, in a severe tone, "No struggle of generosity. We have no time to be magnanimous. You are wounded. I order you to live and to fly. Quick! Take advantage of this outlet. Thanks, Halmalo."

"Marquis, must we separate?" asked the Abbé Turmeau.

"Below, without doubt. We can only escape one by one."

"Does monseigneur assign us a rendezvous?"

"Yes. A glade in the forest. La Pierre Gauvaine. Do you know the place?"

"We all know it."

"I shall be there to-morrow at noon. Let all those who can walk meet me at that time."

"Every man will be there."

"And we will begin the war anew," said the marquis.

As Halmalo pushed against the turning-stone, he found that it did not stir. The aperture could not be closed again.

"Monseigneur," he said, "we must hasten. The stone will not move. I was able to open the passage, but I can not shut it."

The stone, in fact, had become deadened, as it were, on its hinges from long disuse. It was impossible to make it revolve back into its place.

"Monseigneur," resumed Halmalo, "I had hoped to close the passage, so that the Blues, when they got in and found no one, would think you must have flown off in the smoke. But the stone will not budge. The enemy will see the outlet open, and can follow. At least, do not let us lose a second. Quick; everybody make for the staircase!"

Imânus laid his hand on Halmalo's shoulder.

"Comrade, how much time will it take to get from here to the forest and to safety?"

"Is there any one seriously wounded?" asked Halmalo.

They answered, "Nobody."

"In that case, a quarter of an hour will be enough."

"Go," said Imânus; "if the enemy can be kept out of here for a quarter of an hour—"

"They may follow; they can not overtake us."

"But," said the marquis, "they will be here in five minutes; that old chest can not hold out against them any longer. A few blows from their muskets will end the business. A quarter of an hour! Who can keep them back for a quarter of an hour?"

"I," said Imânus.

"You, Gouge-le-Bruant?"

"I, monseigneur. Listen. Five out of six of you are wounded. I have not a scratch."

"Nor I," said the marquis.

"You are the chief, monseigneur. I am a soldier. Chief and soldier are two."

"I know we have each a different duty."

"No, monseigneur, we have, you and I, the same duty; it is to save you."

Imânus turned toward his companions.

"Comrades, the thing necessary to be done is to hold the enemy in check and retard the pursuit as long as possible. Listen. I am in possession of my full strength; I have not lost a drop of blood; not being wounded, I can hold out longer than any of the others. Fly, all of you. Leave me your weapons. I will make good use of them. I take it on myself to stop the enemy for a good half-hour. How many loaded pistols are there?"

"Four."

"Lay them on the floor."

His command was obeyed.

"It is well. I stay here. They will find somebody to talk with. Now—quick—get away."

Life and death hung in the balance; there was no time for thanks—scarcely time for those nearest to grasp his hand.

"We shall meet soon," the marquis said to him.

"No, monseigneur; I hope not—not soon—for I am going to die."

They got through the opening one after another and passed down the stairs—the wounded going first. While the men were escaping, the marquis took a pencil out of a notebook which he carried in his pocket and wrote a few words on the stone, which, remaining motionless, left the passage gaping open.

"Come, monseigneur, they are all gone but you," said Halmalo. And the sailor began to descend the stairs. The marquis followed.

Imânus remained alone.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EXECUTIONER.

THE four pistols had been laid on the flags, for the chamber had no flooring above them. Imânus grasped a pistol in either hand. He moved obliquely toward the entrance to the staircase which the chest obstructed and masked.

The assailants evidently feared some surprise—one of those final explosions which involve conqueror and conquered in the same catastrophe. This last attack was as slow and prudent as the first had been impetuous. They had not been able to push the chest backward into the chamber—perhaps would not have done it if they could. They had broken the bottom with blows from their muskets, and pierced the top with bayonet holes; by these holes they were trying to see into the hall before entering. The light from the lanterns with which they had illuminated the staircase shone through these chinks.

Imânus perceived an eye regarding him through one of the holes. He aimed his pistol quickly at the place and pulled the trigger. To his joy a horrible cry followed the report. The ball had entered the eye and passed through the brain of the soldier, who fell backward down the stairs.

The assailants had broken two large holes in the cover; Imânus thrust his pistol through one of these and fired at random into the mass of besiegers. The ball must have rebounded, for he heard several cries as if three or four were killed or wounded, then there was a great trampling and tumult as the men fell back. Imânus threw down the two pistols which he had just fired, and, taking the two which still remained, peered out

through the holes in the chest. He was able to see what execution his shots had done.

The assailants had descended the stairs. The twisting of the spiral staircase only allowed him to look down three or four steps; the men he had shot lay writhing there in the death-agony. Imânus waited. "It is so much time gained," thought he.

Then he saw a man flat on his stomach creeping up the stairs; at the same instant the head of another soldier appeared lower down from behind the pillar about which the spiral wound. Imânus aimed at this head and fired. A cry followed, the soldier fell, and Imânus, while watching, threw away the empty pistol and changed the loaded one from his left hand to his right.

As he did so he felt a horrible pain, and, in his turn, uttered a yell of agony. A sabre had traversed his bowels. A fist—the fist of the man who had crept up the stairs—had just been thrust through the second hole in the bottom of the chest, and this fist had plunged a sabre into Imânus's body. The wound was frightful; the abdomen was pierced through and through.

Imânus did not fall. He set his teeth together and muttered, "Good!"

Then he dragged himself, tottering along, and retreated to the iron door, at the side of which the torch was still burning. He laid his pistol on the stones and seized the torch, and while with his left hand he held together the terrible wound through which his intestines protruded, with the right he lowered the torch till it touched the sulphur-match.

It caught fire instantaneously—the wick blazed. Imânus dropped the torch—it lay on the ground still burning. He seized his pistol anew, dropped forward upon the flags, and with what breath he had left blew the wick. The flame ran along it,

passed beneath the iron door, and reached the bridge-castle.

Then seeing that his execrable exploit had succeeded—prouder, perhaps, of this crime than of the courage he had before shown—this man, who had just proved himself a hero, only to sink into an assassin, smiled as he stretched himself out to die, and muttered, "They will remember me. I take vengeance on these little ones for the fate of the little one who belongs to us all—the king shut up in the Temple!"

CHAPTER XIV.

IMANUS ALSO ESCAPES.

At this moment there was a great noise—the chest was hurled violently back into the hall, and gave passage to a man who rushed forward, sabre in hand, crying, "It is I—Radoub—what are you going to do? It bores me to wait. I have risked it. Anyway I have just disemboweled one. Now I attack the whole of you. Whether the rest follow me or don't follow me, here I am. How many are there of you?"

It was indeed Radoub, and he was alone!

After the massacre Imânus had caused upon the stairs, Gauvain, fearing some secret mine, had drawn back his men and consulted with Cimourdain.

Radoub, standing sabre in hand upon the threshold, sent his voice anew into the obscurity of the chamber across which the nearly extinguished torch cast a faint gleam, and repeated his question. "I am one. How many are you?"

There was no answer. He stepped forward. One of those sudden jets of light

which an expiring fire sometimes sends out, and which seem like its dying throes, burst from the torch and illuminated the entire chamber. Radoub caught sight of himself in one of the mirrors hanging against the wall—approached it, and examined his bleeding face and wounded ear.

“Horrible mutilation!” said he.

Then he turned about, and, to his utter stupefaction, perceived that the hall was empty.

“Nobody here!” he exclaimed. “Not a creature.”

Then he saw the revolving stone, and the staircase beyond the opening.

“Ah! I understand! The key to the fields. Come up, all of you!” he shouted. “Comrades, come up! They have run away. They have filed off—dissolved—evaporated—cut their lucky. This old jug of a tower has a crack in it. There is the hole they got out by, the beggars. How is anybody to get the better of Pitt and Coburg while they are able to play such comedies as this! The very devil himself came to their rescue. There is nobody here.”

The report of a pistol cut his words short—a ball grazed his elbow and flattened itself against the wall.

“Aha!” said he. “So there is somebody left. Who was good enough to show me that little politeness?”

“I,” answered a voice.

Radoub looked about and caught sight of Imânus in the gloom.

“Ah!” cried he. “I have got one at all events. The others have escaped, but you will not, I promise you.”

“Do you believe it?” retorted Imânus.

Radoub made a step forward and paused.

“Hey, you, lying on the ground there—who are you?”

“I am a man who laughs at you who are standing up.”

“What is it you are holding in your right hand?”

“A pistol.”

“And in your left hand?”

“My entrails.”

“You are my prisoner.”

“I defy you!”

Imânus bowed his head over the burning wick, spent his last breath in stirring the flame, and expired.

A few seconds after, Gauvain and Cimourdain, followed by the whole troop of soldiers, were in the hall. They all saw the opening. They searched the corners of the room and explored the staircase; it had a passage at the bottom which led to the ravine. The besieged had escaped. They raised Imânus—he was dead. Gauvain, lantern in hand, examined the stone which had afforded an outlet to the fugitives; he had heard of the turning-stone, but he, too, had always disbelieved the legend. As he looked he saw some lines written in pencil on the massive block; he held the lantern closer, and read these words: “*Au revoir, Viscount Lantenac.*”

Guéchamp was standing by his commandant. Pursuit was utterly useless; the fugitives had the whole country to aid them—thickets—ravines—copses—the inhabitants. Doubtless they were already far away. There would be no possibility of discovering them—they had the entire Forest of Fougères, with its countless hiding-places, for a refuge. What was to be done? The whole struggle must begin anew. Gauvain and Guéchamp exchanged conjectures and expressions of disappointment. Cimourdain listened gravely, but did not utter a word.

“And the ladder, Guéchamp?” said Gauvain.

"Commandant, it has not come."

"But we saw a wagon escorted by gendarmes."

Guéchamp only replied, "It did not bring the ladder."

"What did it bring, then?"

"The guillotine," said Cimourdain.

CHAPTER XV.

NEVER PUT A WATCH AND A KEY IN THE SAME POCKET.

THE Marquis de Lantenac was not so far away as they believed. But he was none the less in surety, and completely out of their reach. He had followed Halmalo.

The staircase by which they descended in the wake of the other fugitives ended in a narrow vaulted passage close to the ravine and the arches of the bridge. This passage gave upon a deep natural fissure which led into the ravine on one side and into the forest on the other. The windings of the path were completely hidden among the thickets. It would have been impossible to discover a man concealed there. A fugitive, once arrived at this point, had only to twist away like a snake. The opening from the staircase into the secret passage was so completely obstructed by brambles that the builders of the passage had not thought it necessary to close the way in any other manner.

The marquis had only to go forward now. He was not placed in any difficulty by lack of a disguise. He had not thrown aside his peasant's dress since coming to Brittany, thinking it more in character.

When Halmalo and the marquis passed out of the passage into the cleft, the five other men, Guinoiseau, Hoisnard, Branche-d'Or, Brin d'Amour, Chatenay, and the Abbé Turmeau were no longer there.

"They did not take much time to get away," said Halmalo.

"Follow their example," returned the marquis.

"Must I leave, monseigneur?"

"Without doubt. I have already told you so. Each must escape alone to be safe. One man passes where two cannot. We should attract attention if we were together. You would lose my life and I yours."

"Does monseigneur know the district?"

"Yes."

"Monseigneur still gives the rendezvous for the Pierre Gauvaine?"

"To-morrow. At noon."

"I shall be there. We shall all be there."

Then Halmalo burst out, "Ah, monseigneur! When I think that we were together in the open sea, that we were alone, that I wanted to kill you, that you were my master, that you could have told me so, and that you did not speak! What a man you are!"

The marquis replied, "England! There is no other resource. In fifteen days the English must be in France."

"I have much to tell monseigneur. I obeyed his orders."

"We will talk of all that to-morrow."

"Farewell till to-morrow, monseigneur."

"By-the-way—are you hungry?"

"Perhaps I am, monseigneur. I was in such a hurry to get here that I am not sure whether I have eaten to-day."

The marquis took a cake of chocolate from his pocket, broke it in half, gave one

piece to Halmalo, and began to eat the other himself.

"Monseigneur," said Halmalo, "at your right is the ravine; at your left, the forest."

"Very good. Leave me. Go your own way."

Halmalo obeyed. He hurried off through the darkness. For a few instants the marquis could hear the crackling of the underbrush, then all was still. By that time it would have been impossible to track Halmalo. This forest of the Breage was the fugitive's auxiliary. He did not flee—he vanished. It was this facility for disappearance which made our armies hesitate before this ever-retreating Vendée, so formidable as it fled.

The marquis remained motionless. He was a man who forced himself to feel nothing, but he could not restrain his emotion on breathing this free air after having been so long stifled in blood and carnage. To feel himself completely at liberty after having seemed so utterly lost; after having seen the grave so close, to be swept so suddenly beyond its reach; to come out of death back into life; it was a shock even to a man like Lantenac. Familiar as he was with danger, in spite of all the vicissitudes he had passed through, he could not at first steady his soul under this.

He acknowledged to himself that he was content. But he quickly subdued this emotion, which was more like joy than any feeling he had known for years. He drew out his watch and struck the hour. What time was it?

To his great astonishment, he found that it was only ten o'clock. When one has just passed through some terrible convulsion of existence in which every hope and life itself were at stake, one is always astounded to find that those awful minutes were no longer than ordinary ones. The

warning cannon had been fired a little before sunset, and La Tourgue attacked by the storming-party half an hour later—between seven and eight o'clock—just as night was falling. The colossal combat, begun at eight o'clock, had ended at ten. This whole *épopée* had only taken a hundred and twenty minutes to enact. Sometimes catastrophes sweep on with the rapidity of lightning. The climax is overwhelming from its suddenness.

On reflection, the astonishing thing was that the struggle could have lasted so long. A resistance for two hours of so small a number against so large a force was extraordinary; and certainly it had not been short or quickly finished, this battle of nineteen against four thousand.

But it was time he should be gone. Halmalo must be far away, and the marquis judged that it would not be necessary to wait there longer. He put his watch back into his vest, but not into the same pocket, for he discovered that the key of the iron door given him by Imânus was there, and the crystal might be broken against the key. Then he moved toward the forest in his turn. As he turned to the left, it seemed to him that a faint gleam of light penetrated the darkness where he stood.

He walked back, and across the underbrush suddenly clear cut against a red background and become visible in their tiniest outlines, he perceived a great light in the ravine. Only a few paces separated him from it. He hurried forward, then stopped, remembering what folly it was to expose himself in that light. Whatever might have happened, after all it did not concern him. Again he set out in the direction Halmalo had indicated, and walked a little way toward the forest.

Suddenly, deep as he was hidden among the brambles, he heard a terrible cry echo

over his head ; this cry seemed to proceed from the very edge of the plateau which stretched above the ravine. The marquis raised his eyes and stood still.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

IN DÆMONE DEUS.

CHAPTER I.

FOUND, BUT LOST.

AT the moment Michelle Fléhard caught sight of the tower, she was more than a league away. She, who could scarcely take a step, did not hesitate before these miles which must be traversed. The woman was weak, but the mother found strength. She walked on.

The sun set ; the twilight came, then the night. Always pressing on, she heard a bell afar off, hidden by the darkness, strike eight o'clock, then nine. The peal probably came from the belfry of Parigué. From time to time she paused to listen to strange sounds like the deadened echo of blows, which might perhaps be the wind in the distance.

She walked straight on, breaking the furze and the sharp heath-stems beneath her bleeding feet. She was guided by a faint light which shone from the distant tower, defining its outlines against the night, and giving a mysterious glow to the tower amidst the surrounding gloom. This light became more distinct when the noise sounded louder, then faded suddenly.

The vast plateau across which Michelle

Fléhard journeyed was covered with grass and heath ; not a house, not a tree appeared. It rose gradually, and, as far as the eye could reach, stretched in a straight hard line against the sombre horizon where a few stars gleamed. She had always the tower before her eyes—the sight kept her strength from failing.

She saw the massive pile grow slowly as she walked on.

We have just said the smothered reports and the pale gleams of light starting from the tower were intermittent ; they stopped, then began anew, offering an enigma full of agony to the wretched mother.

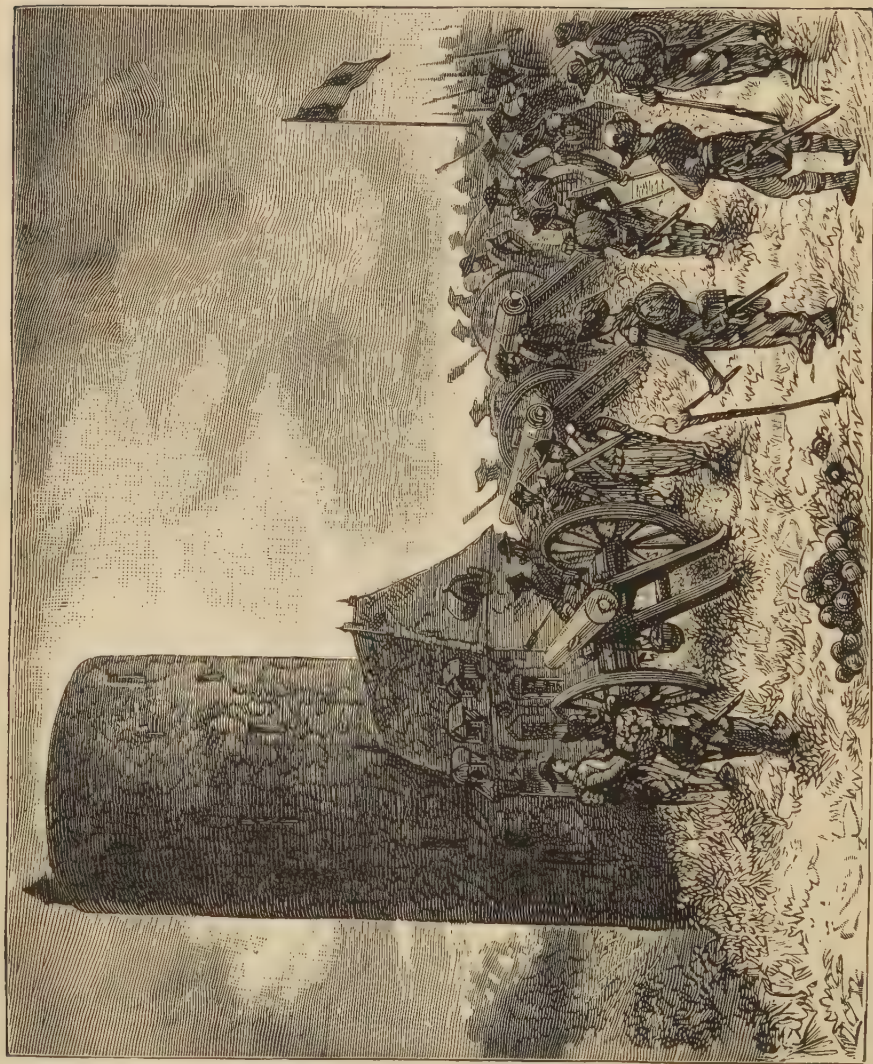
Suddenly they ceased ; noise and gleams of light both died ; there was a moment of complete silence ; an ominous tranquillity.

It was just at this moment that Michelle Fléhard reached the edge of the plateau.

She saw at her feet a ravine whose bottom was lost in the wan indistinctness of the night ; at a little distance, on the top of the plateau, an entanglement of wheels, metal, and harness, which was a battery ; and before her, confusedly lighted by the matches of the cannon, an enormous edifice that seemed built of shadows blacker than the shadows which surrounded it. This mass of buildings was composed of a bridge whose arches were imbedded in the ravine, and of a sort of castle which rose upon the bridge ; both bridge and castle were supported against a lofty circular shadow—the tower toward which this mother had journeyed from so far.

You could see lights come and go in the loop-holes of the tower, and from the noise which surged up she divined that it was filled with a crowd of men—indeed, now and then their gigantic shadows were flung out on the night.

Near the battery was a camp whose



PREPARING FOR THE ATTACK.

outposts Michelle Fléhard might have perceived through the gloom and the underbrush, but she had as yet noticed nothing.

She went close to the edge of the plateau, so near the bridge that it seemed to her she could almost touch it with her hand. The depth of the ravine alone kept her from reaching it. She could make out in the gloom the three stories of the bridge-castle. How long she stood there she could not have told, for her mind, absorbed in her mute contemplation of this gaping ravine and this shadowy edifice, took no note of time. What was this building? What was going on within? Was it La Tourgue? A strange dizziness seized her; in her confusion she could not tell if this were the goal she had been seeking on the starting point of a terrible journey. She asked herself why she was there. She looked; she listened.

Suddenly a great blackness shut out every object. A cloud of smoke swept up between her and the pile she was watching; a sharp report forced her to close her eyes. Scarcely had she done so, when a great light reddened the lids. She looked again.

It was no longer the night she had before her; it was the day—but a fearful day—the day born of fire. She was watching the beginning of a conflagration.

From black the smoke had become scarlet, filled with a mighty flame, which appeared and disappeared, writhing and twisting in serpentine coils. The flame burst out like a tongue from something which resembled blazing jaws; it was the embrasure of a window filled with fire. This window, covered by iron bars, already reddening in the heat, was a casement in the lower story of the bridge-castle. Nothing of the edifice was visible except

this window. The smoke covered even the plateau, leaving only the mouth of the ravine black against the vermilion flames. Michelle Fléhard stared in dumb wonder. It was like a dream—she could no longer tell where reality ended, and the confused fancies of her poor troubled brain began. Ought she to fly? Should she remain? There was nothing real enough for any definite decision to steady her mind.

A wind swept up and burst the curtain of smoke; in the opening the frowning bastille rose suddenly in view: donjon, bridge, châtelet; dazzling in the terrible gilding of conflagration which framed it from top to bottom. The appalling illumination showed Michelle Fléhard every detail of the ancient keep.

The lower story of the bridge-castle was burning. Above rose the other two stories, still untouched, but as it were supported on a pedestal of flames.

From the edge of the plateau where Michelle Fléhard stood, she could catch broken glimpses of the interior between the clouds of smoke and fire. The windows were all open.

Through the great casements of the second story, Michelle Fléhard could make out the cupboards stretched along the walls, which looked to her full of books, and by one of the windows could see a little group lying on the floor, in the shadow, indistinct and massed together like birds in a nest, which at times she fancied she saw move. She looked fixedly in this direction.

What was that little group lying there in the shadow?

Sometimes it flashed across her mind that those were living forms; but she had fever, she had eaten nothing since morning, she had walked without intermission, she was utterly exhausted, she felt herself

giving way to a sort of hallucination which she had still reason enough to struggle against. Still her eyes fixed themselves ever more steadily upon that one point; she could not look away from that little heap upon the floor—a mass of inanimate objects, doubtless, that had been left in that room below which the flames roared and billowed.

Suddenly the fire, as if animated by a will and purpose, flung downward a jet of flame toward the great dead ivy which covered the façade whereat Michelle Fléchard was gazing.

It seemed as if the fire had just discovered this outwork of dried branches; a spark darted greedily upon it, and a line of flame spread upward from twig to twig with frightful rapidity. In the twinkling of an eye it reached the second story. As they rose, the flames illuminated the chamber of the first floor, and the awful glare threw out in bold relief the three little creatures lying asleep upon the floor. A lovely, statuesque group of legs and arms interlaced, closed eyes and angelic, smiling faces.

The mother recognized her children!

She uttered a terrible cry. That cry of indescribable agony is only given to mothers. No sound is at once so savage and so touching. When a woman utters it, you seem to hear the yell of a she-wolf; when the she-wolf cries thus, you seem to hear the voice of a woman.

This cry of Michelle Fléchard was a howl. Hecuba howled, says Homer.

It was this cry which reached the Marquis de Lantenac. When he heard it he stood still. The marquis was between the outlet of the passage through which he had been guided by Halmalo and the ravine. Across the brambles which inclosed him he saw the bridge in flames and La Tourgue red with the reflection.

Looking upward through the opening which the branches left above his head, he perceived close to the edge of the plateau on the opposite side of the gulf, in front of the burning castle, in the full light of the conflagration, the haggard, anguish-stricken face of a woman bending over the depth.

It was this woman who had uttered that cry.

The face was no longer that of Michelle Fléchard; it was Medusa's. She was appalling in her agony. The peasant woman was transformed into one of the Eumenides. This unknown villager, vulgar, ignorant, unreasoning, had risen suddenly to the epic grandeur of despair. Great sufferings swell the soul to gigantic proportions. This was no longer a simple mother—all maternity's voice cried out through hers; whatever sums up and becomes a type of humanity grows superhuman. There she towered on the edge of that ravine, in front of that conflagration, in presence of that crime, like a power from beyond the grave; she moaned like a wild beast, but her attitude was that of a goddess; the mouth, which uttered imprecations, was set in a flaming mask. Nothing could have been more despotic than her eyes shooting lightnings through her tears.

The marquis listened. Her voice flung its echoes down upon his head: inarticulate, heart-rending—sobs rather than words.

"Ah my God, my children! Those are my children! Help! Fire! fire! fire! Oh, you brigands! Is there no one here? My children are burning up! Georgette! My babies! Gros Alain—René Jean! What does it mean? Who put my children there? They are asleep. Oh, I am mad! It is impossible! Help, help!"

Still a great bustle and movement was

apparent in La Tourgue and upon the plateau. The whole camp rushed out to the fire which had just burst forth. The besiegers, after meeting the grape-shot, had now to deal with the conflagration. Gauvain, Cimourdain, and Guéchamp were giving orders. What was to be done? Only a few buckets of water could be drained from the half-dried brook of the ravine. The consternation increased. The whole edge of the plateau was covered with men whose troubled faces watched the progress of the flames.

What they saw was terrible. They gazed, and could do nothing.

The flames had spread along the ivy and reached the topmost story, leaping greedily upon the straw with which it was filled. The entire granary was burning now. The flames wreathed and danced as if in fiendish joy. A cruel breeze fanned the pyre. One could fancy the evil spirit of Imânus urging on the fire, and rejoicing in the destruction which had been his last earthly crime.

The library, though between the two burning stories, was not yet on fire; the height of its ceiling and the thickness of the walls retarded the fatal moment—but it was fast approaching; the flames from below licked the stones—the flames from above whirled down to caress them with the awful embrace of death: beneath, a cave of lava—above, an arch of embers. If the floor fell first, the children would be flung into the lava stream; if the ceiling gave way, they would be buried beneath a brazier of burning coals.

The little ones slept still; across the sheets of flame and smoke which now hid, now exposed the casements, they were visible in that fiery grotto, within that meteoric glare, peaceful, lovely, motionless, like three confident cherubs slumber-

ing in a hell; a tiger might have wept to see those angels in that furnace, those cradles in that tomb.

And the mother was shrieking still: "Fire! I say, fire! Are they all deaf, that nobody comes? They are burning my children! Come—come—you men that I see yonder. Oh, the days and days that I have hunted—and this is where I find them! Fire! Help! Three angels—to think of three angels burning there! What had they done, the innocents? They shot me—they are burning my little ones. Who is it does such things? Help! Save my children! Do you not hear me? A dog—one would have pity on a dog! My children—my children! They are asleep. Oh, Georgette—I see her face! René Jean! Gros Alain! Those are their names. You may know I am their mother. Oh, it is horrible! I have traveled days and nights! Why, this very morning I talked of them with a woman! Help, help! Where are those monsters? Horror, horror! The eldest not five years old—the youngest not two. I can see their little bare legs. They are asleep, Holy Virgin! Heaven gave them to me, and devils snatch them away. To think how far I have journeyed! My children, that I nourished with my milk! I, who thought myself wretched because I could not find them! Have pity on me. I want my children—I must have my children! And there they are in the fire! See, how my poor feet bleed! Help! It is not possible, if there are men on the earth, that my little ones will be left to die like this. Help! Murder! Oh, such a thing was never seen! Oh, assassins! What is that dreadful house there? They stole my children from me in order to kill them. God of mercy, give me my children! They shall not die! Help—help—

help! Oh, I shall curse heaven itself, if they die like that!"

While the mother's awful supplications rang out, other voices rose upon the plateau and in the ravine.

"A ladder!"

"There is no ladder!"

"Water!"

"There is no water!"

"Up yonder—in the tower—on the second story, there is a door."

"It is iron."

"Break it in!"

"Impossible!"

And the mother, redoubling her agonized appeals: "Fire! Help! Hurry, I say—if you will not kill me! My children, my children! Oh, the horrible fire! Take them out of it, or throw me in!"

In the interval between these clamors the triumphant crackling of the flames could be heard.

The marquis put his hand in his pocket and touched the key of the iron door. Then, stooping again beneath the vault through which he had escaped, he turned back into the passage from whence he had just emerged.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE DOOR OF STONE TO THE IRON DOOR.

A WHOLE army distracted by the impossibility of giving aid; four thousand men unable to succor three children; such was the situation.

Not even a ladder to be had; that sent from Javené had not arrived. The flaming space widened like a crater that opens.

To attempt the staying of the fire by means of the half-dried brook would have been mad folly—like flinging a glass of water on a volcano.

Cimourdan, Guéchamp, and Radoub had descended into the ravine; Gauvain remounted to the room in the second story of the tower, where were the stone that turned, the secret passage, and the iron door leading into the library. It was there that the sulphur-match had been lighted by Imânus; from these the conflagration had started.

Gauvain took with him twenty sappers. There was no possible resource except to break open the iron door—its fastenings were terribly secure.

They began by blows with axes. The axes broke. A sapper said: "Steel snaps like glass against that iron."

The door was made of double sheets of wrought iron, bolted together; each sheet three fingers in thickness.

They took iron bars and tried to shake the door beneath their blows; the bars broke "like matches!" said one of the sappers.

Gauvain murmured gloomily, "Nothing but a ball could open that door. If we could only get a cannon up here."

"But how to do it!" answered the sapper.

There was a moment of overwhelmment. Those powerless arms ceased their efforts. Mute, conquered, dismayed, these men stood staring at the immovable door. A red reflection crept from beneath it. Behind, the conflagration was each instant increasing.

The frightful corpse of Imânus lay on the floor—a demoniac victor. Only a few moments more and the whole bridge-castle might fall in. What could be done? There was not a hope left.

Gauvain, with his eyes fixed on the

turning-stone and the secret passage, cried furiously, "It was by that the Marquis de Lantenac escaped."

"And returns," said a voice.

The face of a white-haired man appeared in the stone frame of the secret opening. It was the marquis!

Many years had passed since Gauvain had seen that face so near. He recoiled. The rest stood petrified with astonishment.

The marquis held a large key in his hand; he cast a haughty glance upon the sappers standing before him, walked straight to the iron door, bent beneath the arch, and put the key in the lock. The iron creaked; the door opened revealing a gulf of flame—the marquis entered it. He entered with a firm step—his head erect. The lookers-on followed him with their eyes.

The marquis had scarcely moved half a dozen paces down the blazing hall when the floor, undermined by the fire, gave way beneath his feet and opened a precipice between him and the door. He did not even turn his head—he walked steadily on. He disappeared in the smoke. Nothing more could be seen.

Had he been able to advance farther? Had a new slough of fire opened beneath his feet? Had he only succeeded in destroying himself? They could not tell. They had before them only a wall of smoke and flame. The marquis was beyond that, living or dead.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHILDREN WAKE.

THE little ones opened their eyes at last.

The conflagration had not yet entered the library, but it cast a rosy glow across the ceiling. The children had never seen an aurora like that; they watched it. Georgette was in ecstasies. The conflagration unfurled all its splendors; the black hydra and the scarlet dragon appeared amidst the wreathing smoke in awful darkness and gorgeous vermilion. Long streaks of flame shot far out and illuminated the shadows, like opposing comets pursuing one another. Fire is recklessly prodigal with its treasures; its furnaces are filled with gems which it flings to the winds; it is not for nothing that charcoal is identical with the diamond.

Fissures had opened in the wall of the upper story, through which the embers poured like cascades of jewels; the heaps of straw and rats burning in the granary began to stream out of the windows in an avalanche of golden rain, the rats turning to amethysts and the straw to carbuncles.

"Pretty!" said Georgette.

They all three raised themselves.

"Ah!" cried the mother. "They have wakened!"

René Jean got up, then Gros Alain, and Georgette followed.

René Jean stretched his arms toward the window and said, "I am warm."

"Me warm," cooed Georgette.

The mother shrieked: "My children! René! Alain! Georgette!"

The little ones looked about. They strove to comprehend. When men are frightened children are only curious. He

who is easily astonished is difficult to alarm; ignorance is intrepidity. Children have so little claim to purgatory that if they saw it they would admire.

The mother repeated, "René! Alain! Georgette!"

René Jean turned his head; that voice roused him from his reverie. Children have short memories, but their recollections are swift; the whole past is yesterday to them. René Jean saw his mother, found that perfectly natural, and feeling a vague want of support in the midst of those strange surroundings, he called, "Mamma!"

"Mamma!" said Gros Alain.

"M'ma!" said Georgette.

And she held out her little arms.

"My children!" shrieked the mother.

All three went close to the window-ledge; fortunately the fire was not on that side.

"I am too warm," said René Jean. He added, "It burns." Then his eyes sought the mother. "Come here, mamma!" he cried.

"Tum, m'ma," repeated Georgette.

The mother, with her hair streaming about her face, her garments torn, her feet and hands bleeding, let herself roll from bush to bush down into the ravine. Cimourdain and Guéchamp were there, as powerless as Gauvain was above. The soldiers, desperate at being able to do nothing, swarmed about. The heat was insupportable, but nobody felt it. They looked at the bridge—the height of the arches—the different stories of the castle—the inaccessible windows. Help to be of any avail must come at once. Three stories to climb. No way of doing it.

Radoub, wounded, with a sabre-cut on his shoulder and one ear torn off, rushed forward dripping with sweat and blood. He saw Michelle Fléchard.

"Hold!" cried he. "The woman that was shot! So you have come to life again?"

"My children!" groaned the mother.

"You are right," answered Radoub; "we have no time to occupy ourselves about ghosts."

He attempted to climb the bridge, but in vain; he dug his nails in between the stones and clung there for a few seconds, but the layers were as smoothly joined as if the wall had been new—Radoub fell back. The conflagration swept on, each instant growing more terrible. They could see the heads of the three children framed in the red light of the window. In his frenzy Radoub shook his clenched hand at the sky, and shouted, "Is there no mercy yonder!"

The mother, on her knees, clung to one of the piers crying, "Mercy, mercy!"

The hollow sound of cracking timbers rose above the roar of the flames. The panes of glass in the book-cases of the library cracked and fell with a crash. It was evident that the timber-work had given way. Human strength could do nothing. Another moment and the whole would fall. The soldiers only waited for the final catastrophe. They could hear the little voices repeat "Mamma! mamma!"

The whole crowd was paralyzed with horror. Suddenly, at the casement near that where the children stood, a tall form appeared against the crimson background of the flames.

Every head was raised—every eye fixed. A man was above there—a man in the library—in the furnace. The face showed black against the flames, but they could see the white hair—they recognized the Marquis de Lantenac. He disappeared, then appeared again.

The indomitable old man stood in the

window shoving out an enormous ladder. It was the escape-ladder deposited in the library—he had seen it lying upon the floor and dragged it to the window. He held it by one end—with the marvelous agility of an athlete he slipped it out of the casement, and slid it along the wall down into the ravine.

Radoub folded his arms about the ladder as it descended within his reach, crying, "Live the Republic!"

The marquis shouted, "Live the King!"

Radoub muttered, "You may cry what you like, and talk nonsense if you please, you are an angel of mercy all the same."

The ladder was settled in place, and communication established between the burning floor and the ground. Twenty men rushed up, Radoub at their head, and in the twinkling of an eye they were hanging to the rungs from the top to the bottom, making a human ladder. He had his face turned toward the conflagration. The little army scattered among the heath and along the sides of the ravine pressed forward, overcome by contending emotions, upon the plateau, into the ravine, out on the platform of the tower.

The marquis disappeared again, then re-appeared bearing a child in his arms. There was a tremendous clapping of hands.

The marquis had seized the first little one that he found within reach. It was Gros Alain.

Gros Alain cried, "I am afraid."

The marquis gave the boy to Radoub; Radoub passed him on to the soldier behind, who passed him to another, and just as Gros Alain, greatly frightened and sobbing loudly, was given from hand to hand to the bottom of the ladder, the marquis who had been absent for a moment returned to the window with René Jean, who struggled and wept and beat Radoub

with his little fists as the marquis passed him on to the sergeant.

The marquis went back into the chamber that was now filled with flames. Georgette was there alone. He went up to her. She smiled. This man of granite felt his eyelids grow moist. He asked, "What is your name?"

"Orgette," said she.

He took her in his arms; she was still smiling, and, at the instant he handed her to Radoub, that conscience so lofty, and yet so darkened, was dazzled by the beauty of innocence; the old man kissed the child.

"It is the little girl!" said the soldiers; and Georgette in her turn descended from arm to arm till she reached the ground, amidst cries of exultation. They clapped their hands; they leaped; the old grenadiers sobbed, and she smiled at them.

The mother stood at the foot of the ladder breathless, mad, intoxicated by this change—flung, without transition, from hell into paradise. Excess of joy lacerates the heart in its own way. She extended her arms; she received first Gros Alain, then René Jean, then Georgette. She covered them with frantic kisses, then burst into a wild laugh and fainted.

A great cry rose: "They are all saved!"

All were indeed saved, except the old man.

But no one thought of him—not even he himself, perhaps. He remained for a few instants leaning against the window-ledge lost in a reverie, as if he wished to leave the gulf of flames time to make a decision. Then, without the least haste, slowly indeed and proudly, he stepped over the window-sill, and erect, upright, his shoulders against the rungs, having the conflagration at his back, the depth before him, he began to descend the ladder in silence with the majesty of a phantom. The men

who were on the ladder sprang off; every witness shuddered; about this man thus descending from that height there was a sacred horror as about a vision. But he plunged calmly into the darkness before him; they recoiled, he drew nearer them; the marble pallor of his face showed no emotion; his haughty eyes were calm and cold; at each step he made toward those men whose wondering eyes gazed upon him out of the darkness, he seemed to tower higher, the ladder shook and echoed under his firm tread—one might have thought him the statue of the commandatore descending anew into his sepulchre.

As the marquis reached the bottom, and his foot left the last rung and planted itself on the ground, a hand seized his shoulder. He turned about.

"I arrest you," said Cimourdain.

"I approve of what you do," said Lantenac.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

THE COMBAT AFTER THE VICTORY.

CHAPTER I.

LANTENAC TAKEN.

THE marquis had indeed descended into the tomb. He was led away.

The crypt dungeon of the ground-floor of La Tourgue was immediately opened under Cimourdain's lynx-eyed superintendence. A lamp was placed within, a jug of water and a loaf of soldier's bread; a bundle of straw was flung on the ground,

and in less than a quarter of an hour from the instant when the priest's hand seized Lantenac the door of the dungeon closed upon him.

This done, Cimourdain went to find Gauvain; at that instant eleven o'clock sounded from the distant church-clock of Parigué. Cimourdain said to his former pupil, "I am going to convoke a court-martial; you will not be there. You are a Gauvain, and Lantenac is a Gauvain." You are too near a kinsman to be his judge; I blame Égalité for having voted upon Capet's sentence. The court-martial will be composed of three judges; an officer, Captain Guéchamp; a non-commissioned officer, Sergeant Radoub, and myself—I shall preside. Nothing of all this concerns you any longer. We will conform to the decree of the Convention; we will confine ourselves to proving the identity of the *cidevant* Marquis de Lantenac. To-morrow the court-martial—day after to-morrow the guillotine. The Vendée is dead."

Gauvain did not answer a word, and Cimourdain, preoccupied by the final task which remained for him to fulfill, left the young man alone. Cimourdain had to decide upon the hour and choose the place. He had, like Lequinio at Granulle, like Tallien at Bordeaux, like Châlier at Lyons, like Saint-Just at Strasbourg, the habit of assisting personally at executions; it was considered a good example for the judge to come and see the headsman do his work—a custom borrowed by the Terror of '93 from the parliaments of France and the Inquisition of Spain.

Gauvain also was preoccupied.

A cold wind moaned up from the forest; Gauvain left Guéchamp to give the necessary orders, went to his tent in the meadow which stretched along the edge of the wood at the foot of La Tourgue, took

his hooded cloak and enveloped himself therein. This cloak was bordered with the simple galoon which, according to the Republican custom, chary of ornament, designated the commander-in-chief. He began to walk about in this bloody field where the attack had commenced. He was alone there. The fire still continued, but no one any longer paid attention to it. Radoub was beside the children and their mother, almost as maternal as she. The bridge-castle was nearly consumed—the sappers hastened the destruction. The soldiers were digging trenches in order to bury the dead; the wounded were being cared for; the retirade had been demolished; the chambers and stairs disencumbered of the dead; the soldiers were cleansing the scene of carnage, sweeping away the terrible rubbish of the victory; with true military rapidity setting everything in order after the battle. Gauvain saw nothing of all this.

So profound was his reverie that he scarcely cast a glance toward the guard about the tower, doubled by the orders of Cimourdain.

He could distinguish the breach through the obscurity, perhaps two hundred feet away from the corner of the field where he had taken refuge. He could see the black opening. It was there the attack had commenced three hours before; it was by this dark gap that he—Gauvain—had penetrated into the tower; there was the ground-floor where the retirade had stood; it was on that same floor that the door of the marquis's prison opened. The guard at the breach watched this dungeon.

While his eyes were absently fixed upon the heath, in his ear rang confusedly, like the echo of a knell, these words: "Tomorrow the court-martial; day after tomorrow, the guillotine."

The conflagration, which had been isolated, and upon which the sappers had thrown all the water that could be procured, did not die away without resistance; it still cast out intermittent flames. At moments the cracking of the ceilings could be heard, and the crash one upon another of the different stories as they fell in a common ruin; then a whirlwind of sparks would fly through the air, as if a gigantic torch had been shaken; a glare like lightning illuminated the farthest verge of the horizon, and the shadow of La Tourgue, growing suddenly colossal, spread out to the edge of the forest. Gauvain walked slowly back and forth amidst the gloom in front of the breach. At intervals he clasped his two hands at the back of his head, covered with his soldier's hood. He was thinking.

CHAPTER II.

GAUVAIN'S SELF-QUESTIONING.

His reverie was fathomless. A seemingly impossible change had taken place.

The Marquis de Lantenac had been transfigured.

Gauvain had been a witness of this transfiguration. He would never have believed that such a state of affairs would arrive from any complication of events whatever they might be. Never would he have imagined, even in a dream, that anything similar would be possible.

The unexpected—that inexplicable power which plays with man at will—had seized Gauvain, and held him fast.

He had before him the impossible become a reality, visible, palpable, inevitable, inexorable. What did he think of it—he, Gauvain?

There was no chance of evasion; the decision must be made. A question was put to him; he could not avoid it. Put by whom? By events.

And not alone by events. For when events, which are mutable, address a question to our souls, Justice, which is unchangeable, summons us to reply.

Above the cloud which casts its shadow upon us is the star that sends toward us its light. We can no more escape from the light than from the shadow.

Gauvain was undergoing an interrogatory. He had been arraigned before a judge. Before a terrible judge. His conscience.

Gauvain felt every power of his soul vacillate. His resolutions the most solid, his promises the most piously uttered, his decisions the most irrevocable, all tottered in this terrible overwhelming of his will. These are moral earthquakes. The more he reflected upon that which he had lately seen, the more confused he became.

Gauvain, Republican, believed himself, and was, just. A higher justice had revealed itself. Above the justice of revolutions is that of humanity.

What had happened could not be eluded; the case was grave; Gauvain made part of it; he could not withdraw himself, and, although Cimourdain had said, "It concerns you no further," he felt within his soul the pang which a tree may feel when torn upward from its roots.

Every man has a basis; a disturbance of this base causes a profound trouble—it was what Gauvain now felt. He pressed his head between his two hands, searching for the truth. To state clearly

a situation like his is not easy; nothing could be more painful; he had before him the formidable ciphers which he must sum up into a total; to judge a human destiny by mathematical rules: his head whirled. He tried; he endeavored to consider the matter; he forced himself to collect his ideas, to discipline the resistance which he felt within himself, and to recapitulate the facts. He set them all before his mind.

To whom has it not arrived to make such a report, and to interrogate himself in some supreme circumstances upon the route which must be followed, whether to advance or retreat?

Gauvain had just been witness of a miracle. Before the earthly combat had fairly ended, there came a celestial struggle. The conflict of good against evil. A heart of adamant had been conquered.

Given the man, with all that he had of evil within him, violence, error, blindness, unwholesome obstinacy, pride, egotism—Gauvain had just witnessed a miracle. The victory of humanity over the man. Humanity had conquered the inhuman. And by what means? In what manner? How had it been able to overthrow that colossus of rage and hatred? What arms had it employed? What implement of war? The cradle!

Gauvain had been dazzled. In the midst of social war, in the very acme of all hatreds and all vengeance, at the darkest and most furious moment of the tumult, at the hour when crime gave all its fires, and hate all its blackness—at that instant of conflict, when every sentiment becomes a projectile, when the *mêlée* is so fierce that one no longer knows what is justice, honesty, or truth, suddenly the Unknown—mysterious warn-er of *souls*—sent the grand rays of eter-

nal truth resplendent across human light and darkness.

Above that sombre duel between the false and the relatively true, there, in the depths, the face of truth itself abruptly appeared. Suddenly the face of the feeble had interposed.

He had seen three poor creatures, almost new born, unreasoning, abandoned, orphans, alone, lisping, smiling, having against them civil war, retaliation, the horrible logic of reprisals, murder, carnage, fratricide, rage, hatred, all the Gorgons—triumph against those powers. He had seen the defeat and extinction of a horrible conflagration charged to commit a crime; he had seen atrocious premeditations disconcerted and brought to naught; he had seen ancient feudal ferocity, inexorable disdain, the professed experiences of the necessities of war, the reasons of State, all the arrogant resolves of a savage old age, vanish before the clear gaze of those who had not yet lived; and this was natural, for he who has not yet lived has done no evil: he is justice, truth, purity, and the highest angels of Heaven hover about those souls of little children.

A useful spectacle, a counsel, a lesson. The maddened, merciless combatants, in face of all the projects, all the outrages of war, fanaticism, assassination, revenge kindling the fagots, death coming torch in hand, had suddenly seen all powerful Innocence raise itself above this enormous legion of crimes. And Innocence had conquered.

One could say: No, civil war does not exist; barbarism does not exist; hatred does not exist; crime does not exist; darkness does not exist. To scatter these spectres it only needed that divine aurora—Innocence.

Never in any conflict had Satan and

God been more plainly visible. This conflict had a human conscience for its arena. The conscience of Lantenac.

Now the battle began again, more desperate, more decisive still perhaps, in another conscience—the conscience of Gauvain.

What a battle-ground is the soul of man! We are given up to those gods, those monsters, those giants—our thoughts. Often these terrible belligerents trample our very souls down in their mad conflict.

Gauvain meditated.

The Marquis de Lantenac, surrounded, doomed, condemned, outlawed, shut in like the wild beast in the circus, held like a nail in the pincers, inclosed in his refuge become his prison, bound on every side by a wall of iron and fire, had succeeded in stealing away. He had performed a miracle in escaping. He had accomplished that masterpiece—the most difficult of all in such a war—flight. He had again taken possession of the forest, to intrench himself therein—of the district, to fight there—of the shadow, to disappear within it. He had once more become the formidable, the dangerous wanderer—the captain of the invincibles—the chief of the under-ground forces—the master of the woods. Gauvain had the victory, but Lantenac had his liberty. Henceforth Lantenac had security before him, limitless freedom, an inexhaustible choice of asylums. He was indiscernible, unapproachable, inaccessible. The lion had been taken in the snare, and had broken through. Well, he had re-entered it.

The Marquis de Lantenac had voluntarily, spontaneously, by his own free act, left the forest, the shadow, security, liberty, to return to that horrible peril; intrepid when Gauvain saw him the first time plunge into the conflagration at the

risk of being engulfed therein; intrepid a second time, when he descended that ladder which delivered him to his enemies—a ladder of escape to others, of perdition to him.

And why had he thus acted? To save three children. And now what was it they were about to do to this man? Guillotine him.

Had these three children been his own? No. Of his family? No. Of his rank? No. For three little beggars—chance children, foundlings, unknown, ragged, barefooted—this noble, this prince, this old man, free, safe, triumphant—for evasion is a triumph—had risked all, compromised all, lost all; and at the same time he restored the babes, had proudly brought his own head, and this head, hitherto terrible, but now august, he offered to his foes. And what were they about to do? Accept the sacrifice.

The Marquis de Lantenac had had the choice between the life of others and his own: in this superb option he had chosen death. And it was to be granted him. He was to be killed. What a reward for heroism! Respond to a generous act by a barbarous one! What a degrading of the Revolution! What a belittling of the Republic!

As this man of prejudice and servitude, suddenly transformed, returned into the circle of humanity, the men who strove for deliverance and freedom elected to cling to the horrors of civil war, to the routine of blood, to fratricide! The divine law of forgiveness, abnegation, redemption, sacrifice, existed for the combatants of error, and did not exist for the soldiers of truth!

What! Not to make a struggle in magnanimity? Resign themselves to this defeat? They, the stronger, to show themselves the weaker? They victorious,

to become assassins, and cause it to be said that there were those on the side of monarchy who saved children, and those on the side of the Republic who slew old men!

The world would see this great soldier, this powerful octogenarian, this disarmed warrior, stolen rather than captured, seized in the performance of a good action, seized by his own permission with the sweat of a noble devotion still upon his brow, mount the steps of the scaffold as he would mount to the grandeur of an apotheosis! And they would put beneath the knife that head about which would circle, as suppliants, the souls of the three little angels he had saved! And before this punishment—infamous for the butchers—a smile would be seen on the face of that man, and the blush of shame on the face of the Republic! And this would be accomplished in the presence of Gauvain, the chief! And he who might hinder this would abstain. He would rest content under that haughty absolution: "*This concerns thee no longer.*" And he was not even to say to himself that in such a case abdication of authority was complicity! He was not to perceive that of two men engaged in an action so hideous, he who permits the thing is worse than the man who does the work, because he is the coward!

But this death—had he not promised it? Had not he, Gauvain, the merciful, declared that Lantenac should have no mercy, that he would himself deliver Lantenac to Cimourdain? That head—he owed it. Well, he would pay the debt. So be it. But was this, indeed, the same head?

Hitherto Gauvain had seen in Lantenac only the barbarous warrior, the fanatic of royalty and feudalism, the slaughterer of prisoners, an assassin whom war had let

loose, a man of blood. That man he had not feared; he had proscribed that proscription; the implacable would have found him inexorable. Nothing more simple; the road was marked out and terribly plain to follow; everything foreseen; he would kill those who killed; the path of horror was clear and straight. Unexpectedly that straight line had been broken; a sudden turn in the way revealed a new horizon; a metamorphose had taken place. An unknown Lantenac entered upon the scene. A hero sprang up from the monster; more than a hero—a man. More than a soul—a heart. It was no longer a murderer that Gauvain had before him, but a savior. Gauvain was flung to the earth by a flood of celestial radiance. Lantenac had struck him with the thunder-bolt of generosity.

And Lantenac transfigured could not transfigure Gauvain!

What! Was this stroke of light to produce no counter-stroke? Was the man of the Past to push on in front, and the man of the Future to fall back? Was the man of barbarism and superstition suddenly to unfold angel pinions, and soar aloft to watch the man of the ideal crawl beneath him in the mire and the night? Gauvain to lie wallowing in the blood-stained rut of the Past, while Lantenac rose to a new existence in the sublime Future?

Another thing still. Their family!

This blood which he was about to spill—for to let it be spilled was to spill it himself—was not this his blood, his Gauvain's? His grandfather was dead, but his grand-uncle lived, and this grand-uncle was the Marquis de Lantenac. Would not that ancestor who had gone to the grave rise to prevent his brother from being forced into it? Would he not command his grandson henceforth to respect

that crown of white hairs, become pure as his own angelic halo? Did not a spectre loom with indignant eyes between him, Gauvain, and Lantenac?

Was, then, the aim of the Revolution to denaturalize man? Had she been born to break the ties of family and to stifle the instincts of humanity? Far from it. It was to affirm these glorious realities, not to deny them, that '89 had risen. To overturn the bastiles was to deliver humanity; to abolish feudality was to found families. The author being the point from whence authority sets out, and authority being included in the author, there can be no other authority than paternity; hence the legitimacy of the queen-bee who creates her people, and who, being mother, is queen; hence the absurdity of the king-men, who, not being father, can not be master. Hence the suppression of the king; hence the Republic that comes from all this? Family, humanity, revolution. Revolution is the accession of the peoples, and, at the bottom, the People is Man.

The thing to decide was, whether when Lantenac returned into humanity, Gauvain should return to his family. The thing to decide was, whether the uncle and nephew should meet again in a higher light, or whether the nephew's recoil should reply to the uncle's progress.

The question in this pathetic debate between Gauvain and his conscience had resolved itself into this, and the answer seemed to come of itself—he must save Lantenac. Yes; but France?

Here the dizzying problem suddenly changed its face. What! France at bay? France betrayed, flung open, dismantled? Having no longer a moat, Germany would cross the Rhine; no longer a wall, Italy would leap the Alps, and Spain the Pyrenees. There would remain to France that great abyss, the ocean. She had

for her the gulf. She could back herself against it, and, giantess, supported by the entire sea, could combat the whole earth. A position, after all, impregnable. Yet no; this position would fail her. The ocean no longer belonged to her. In this ocean was England. True, England was at a loss how to traverse it. Well, a man would fling her a bridge; a man would extend his hand to her; a man would go to Pitt, to Craig, to Cornwallis, to Dundas, to the pirates, and say, "Come!" A man would cry, "England, seize France!" And this man was the Marquis de Lantenac.

This man was now held fast. After three months of chase, of pursuit, of frenzy, he had at last been taken. The hand of the Revolution had just closed upon the accursed one; the clenched fist of '93 had seized this Royalist murderer by the throat. Through that mysterious premeditation from on high which mixes itself in human affairs, it was in the dungeon belonging to his family that this parricide awaited his punishment. The feudal lord was in the feudal oubliette. The stones of his own castle rose against him and shut him in, and he who had sought to betray his country had been betrayed by his own dwelling. God had visibly arranged all this; the hour had sounded; the Revolution had taken prisoner this public enemy; he could no longer fight, he could no longer struggle, he could no longer harm; in this Vendée, which owned so many arms, his was the sole brain; with his extinction, civil war would be extinct. He was held fast; tragic and fortunate conclusion. After so many massacres, so much carnage, he was a captive. This man who had slain so pitilessly, and it was his turn to die. And if some one should be found to save him!

Cimourdain, that is to say, '93, held

Lantenac, that is to say, Monarchy, and could any one be found to snatch its prey from that hand of bronze? Lantenac, the man in whom concentrated that sheaf of scourges called the Past—the Marquis de Lantenac was in the tomb—the heavy eternal door had closed upon him—would some one come from without to draw back the bolt? This social malefactor was dead, and with him died revolt, fratricidal contest, bestial war; and would any one be found to resuscitate him? Oh, how that death's-head would laugh! That spectre would say, "It is well; I live again—the idiots!"

How he would once more set himself at his hideous work; how joyously and implacably this Lantenac would plunge anew into the gulf of war and hatred, and on the morrow would be seen again houses burning, prisoners massacred, the wounded slain, women shot.

And, after all, did not Gauvain exaggerate this action which had fascinated him? Three children were lost; Lantenac saved them. But who had flung them into that peril? Was it not Lantenac? Who had set those three cradles in the heart of the conflagration? Was it not Imânus? Who was Imânus? The lieutenant of the marquis. The one responsible is the chief. Hence the incendiary and the assassin was Lantenac. What had he done so admirable? He had not persisted—that was all. After having conceived the crime, he had recoiled before it. He had become horrified at himself. That mother's cry had wakened in him those remains of human mercy which exist in all souls, even the most hardened. At this cry he had returned upon his steps. Out of the night where he had buried himself, he hastened toward the day. After having brought about the crime, he caused its defeat. His whole merit consisted in

this—not to have been a monster to the end. And in return for so little, to restore him all ! To give him freedom, the fields, the plains, air, day, restore to him the forest, which he would employ to shelter his bandits ; restore him liberty, which he would use to bring about slavery ; restore life, which he would devote to death.

As for trying to come to an understanding with him, attempting to treat with that arrogant soul, propose his deliverance under certain conditions, demand if he would consent, were his life spared, henceforth to abstain from all hostilities and all revolt—what an error such an offer would be—what an advantage it would give him—against what scorn would the proposer wound himself—how he would freeze the questioner by his response, “ Keep such shame for yourself—kill me ! ”

There was, in short, nothing to do with this man but to slay or set him free. He was ever ready to soar or to sacrifice himself ; his strange soul held at once the eagle and the abyss. To slay him ? What a pang ! To set him free ? What a responsibility !

Lantenac saved, all was to begin anew with the Vendée, like a struggle with a hydra whose heads had not been severed.

In the twinkling of an eye, with the rapidity of a meteor, the flame extinguished by this man’s disappearance would blaze up again. Lantenac would never stop to rest until he had carried out that execrable plan—to fling, like the cover of a tomb, Monarchy upon the Republic, and England upon France. To save Lantenac was to sacrifice France. Life to Lantenac was death to a host of innocent beings—men, women, children, caught anew in that domestic war ; it was the landing of the English, the recoil of the Revolution ; it was the sacking of the villages, the rending of the people, the man-

gling of Brittany ; it was flinging the prey back into the tiger’s claw. And Gauvain, in the midst of uncertain gleams and rays of introverted light, beheld, vaguely sketched across his reverie, this problem rise : the setting the tiger at liberty.

And then the question re-appeared under its first aspect ; the stone of Sisyphus, which is nothing other than the combat of man with himself, fell back. Was Lantenac that tiger ?

Perhaps he had been ; but was he still ? Gauvain was dizzy beneath the whirl and conflict in his soul ; his thoughts turned and circled upon themselves with serpentine swiftness. After the closest examination could any one deny Lantenac’s devotion, his stoical self-abnegation, his superb disinterestedness ? What ! To attest his humanity in the presence of the open jaws of civil war ! What ! In this contest of inferior truths, to bring the highest truth of all ! What ! To prove that above royalties, above revolutions, above earthly questions, is the grand tenderness of the human soul, the recognition of the protection due to the feeble from the strong, the safety due to those who are perishing from those who are saved, the paternity due to all little children from all old men ! To prove these magnificent truths by the gift of his head. To be a general, and renounce strategy, battle, revenge ! What ! To be a Royalist, and to take a balance and put in one scale the King of France, a monarchy of fifteen centuries, old laws to re-establish, ancient society to restore, and in the other, three little unknown peasants, and to find the king, the throne, the sceptre, and fifteen centuries of monarchy too light to weigh against these three innocent creatures. What ! was all that nothing ? What ! Could he who had done this remain a tiger ? Ought he to be treated

like a wild beast? No, no, no! The man who had just illuminated the abyss of civil war by the light of a divine action was not a monster. The sword-bearer was metamorphosed into the angel of day. The infernal Satan had again become the celestial Lucifer. Lantenac had atoned for all his barbarities by one act of sacrifice; in losing himself materially he had saved himself morally; he had become innocent again; he had signed his own pardon. Does not the right of self-forgiveness exist? Henceforth he was venerable.

Lantenac had just shown himself almost superhuman. It was now Gauvain's turn. Gauvain was called upon to answer him. The struggle of good and evil passions made the world a chaos at this epoch; Lantenac, dominating the chaos, had just brought humanity out of it; it now remained for Gauvain to bring forth their family therefrom. What was he about to do? Was Gauvain about to betray the trust Providence had shown in him? No. And he murmured within himself, "Let us save Lantenac." And a voice answered, "It is well. Go on; aid the English. Desert. Pass over to the enemy. Save Lantenac and betray France." And Gauvain shuddered. "Thy solution is no solution, oh dreamer!"

Gauvain saw the Sphinx smile bitterly in the shadow. This situation was a sort of formidable meeting-ground where hostile truths confronted one another, and where the three highest ideas of man—humanity, family, country—looked in each other's faces. Each of these voices took up the word in its turn, and each uttered truth. Each in its turn seemed to find the point where wisdom and justice met, and said, "Do this!" Was that the thing he ought to do? Yes. No. Argument said one thing, and sentiment an-

other; the two counsels were in direct opposition. Logic is only reason; feeling is often conscience; the one comes from man himself, the other from a higher source. Hence it is that sentiment has less clearness and more power.

Still, what force stern reason possesses! Gauvain hesitated. Maddening perplexity. Two abysses opened before him. Should he let the marquis perish? Should he save him? He must plunge into one depth or the other. Toward which of the two gulfs did Duty point?

CHAPTER III.

THE COMMANDANT'S MANTLE.

It was, after all, with Duty that these victors had to deal. Duty raised herself—stern to Cimourdain's eyes—terrible to those of Gauvain. Simple before the one; complex, diverse, tortuous, before the other.

Midnight sounded; then one o'clock.

Without being conscious of it, Gauvain had gradually approached the entrance to the breach. The expiring conflagration only flung out intermittent gleams. The plateau on the other side of the tower caught the reflection and became visible for an instant, then disappeared from view as the smoke swept over the flames. This glare, reviving in jets and cut by sudden shadows, disproportioned objects, and made the sentinels look like phantoms. Lost in his reverie, Gauvain mechanically watched the strife between the flame and smoke. These appearances and disappearances of the light before his eyes had a strange, subtle analogy with the



AFTER THE VICTORY THE COMBAT BEGINS.

Hugo, vol. IV., Frontispiece.

revealing and concealment of truth in his soul.

Suddenly, between two clouds of smoke, a long streak of flame, shot out from the dying brasier, illuminated vividly the summit of the plateau, and brought out the skeleton of a wagon against the vermillion background.

Gauvain stared at this wagon; it was surrounded by horsemen wearing gendarmes' hats. It seemed to him the wagon which he had looked at through Guéchamp's glass several hours before, when the sun was setting and the wagon away off on the verge of the horizon. Some men were mounted on the cart and appeared to be unloading it. That which they took off seemed to be heavy, and now and then gave out the sound of clanking iron. It would have been difficult to tell what it was; it looked like beams for a framework. Two of the men lifted between them and set upon the ground a box, which, as well as he could judge by the shape, contained a triangular object.

The streak of light faded; all was again buried in darkness. Gauvain stood with fixed eyes lost in thought upon that which the darkness hid.

Lanterns were lighted, men came and went on the plateau; but the forms of those moving about were confused, and, moreover, Gauvain was below and on the other side of the ravine, and therefore could see little of what was passing. Voices spoke, but he could not catch the words. Now and then came a sound like the shock of timbers striking together. He could hear also a strange metallic creaking, like the sharpening of a scythe.

Two o'clock struck.

Slowly, and like one who strove to re-

treat and yet was forced by some invisible power to advance, Gauvain approached the breach. As he came near, the sentinel recognized in the shadow the cloak and braided hood of the commandant, and presented arms. Gauvain entered the hall of the ground-floor, which had been transformed into a guard-room. A lantern hung from the roof. It cast just light enough so that one could cross the hall without treading upon the soldiers who lay, most of them asleep, upon the straw.

There they lay; they had been fighting a few hours before; the grape-shot, partially swept away, scattered its grains of iron and lead over the floor and troubled their repose somewhat, but they were weary, and so slept. This hall had been the battle-ground—the scene of frenzied attack; there men had groaned, howled, ground their teeth, struck out blindly in their death-agony, and expired. Many of these sleepers' companions had fallen dead upon this floor, where they now lay down in their weariness; the straw which served them for a pillow had drunk the blood of their comrades. Now all was ended; the blood had ceased to flow; the sabres were dried; the dead were dead; these sleepers slumbered peacefully. Such is war. And then, perhaps to-morrow, the slumber of sleeping and dead will be the same.

At Gauvain's entrance a few of the men rose—among others, the officer in command. Gauvain pointed to the door of the dungeon.

"Open it," he said to the officer.

The bolts were drawn back; the door opened.

Gauvain entered the dungeon.

The door closed behind him.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

FEUDALITY AND REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE ANCESTOR.

A LAMP set on the flags of the crypt at the side of the air-hole. There could also be seen on the stones a jug of water, a loaf of army bread, and a truss of straw. The crypt being cut out in the rock, the prisoner who had conceived the idea of setting fire to the straw would have done it to his own hurt; no risk of conflagration to the prison, certainly of suffocation to the prisoner.

At the instant the door turned on its hinges the marquis was walking to and fro in his dungeon; that mechanical pacing back and forth natural to wild animals in a cage.

At the noise of the opening and shutting of the door he raised his head, and the lamp which set on the floor between Gauvain and the marquis, struck full upon the faces of both men.

They looked at one another, and something in the glance of either kept the two motionless.

At length the marquis burst out laughing, and exclaimed, "Good-evening, sir. It is a long time since I have had the pleasure of meeting you. You do me the favor of paying me a visit. I thank you. I ask nothing better than to converse a little. I was beginning to bore myself. Your friends lose a great deal of time—proofs of identity—court-martials—all those ceremonies take a long while. I could go much quicker at need. Here I am in my house. Take the

trouble to enter. Well, what do you say of all that is happening? Original, is it not? Once on a time there was a king and a queen; the king was the king; the queen was—France. They cut the king's head off, and married the queen to Robespierre; this gentleman and that lady have a daughter named Guillotine, with whom it appears that I am to make acquaintance to-morrow morning. I shall be delighted—as I am to see you. Did you come about that? Have you risen in rank? Shall you be the headsman? If it is a simple visit of friendship, I am touched. Perhaps, viscount, you no longer know what a nobleman is. Well, you see one—it is I. Look at the specimen. It is an odd race; it believes in God, it believes in tradition, it believes in family, it believes in its ancestors, it believes in the example of its father, in fidelity, loyalty, duty toward its prince, respect to ancient laws, virtue, justice—and it would shoot you with pleasure. Have the goodness to sit down, I pray you. On the stones, it must be, it is true, for I have no armchair in my salon; but he who lives in the mire can sit on the ground. I do not say that to offend you, for what we call the mire you call the nation. I fancy that you do not insist I shall shout Liberty, Equality, Fraternity? This is an ancient chamber of my house; formerly the lords imprisoned clowns here; now rustics imprison the lords. These stupidities are called a Revolution. It appears that my head is to be cut off in thirty-six hours. I see nothing inconvenient in that. Still, if my captors had been polite, they would have sent me my snuff-box; it is up in the chamber of the mirrors, where you used to play when you were a child—where I used to dance you on my knees. Sir, let me tell you one thing! You call yourself Gauvain,

and, strange to say, you have noble blood in your veins; yes, by Heaven, the same that runs in mine; yet the blood that made me a man of honor makes you a rascal. Such are personal idiosyncrasies. You will tell me it is not your fault that you are a rascal. Nor is it mine that I am a gentleman. Zounds! one is a malefactor without knowing it. It comes from the air one breathes; in times like these of ours one is not responsible for what one does; the Revolution is guilty for the whole world, and all your great criminals are great innocents. What blockheads! To begin with yourself. Permit me to admire you. Yes, I admire a youth like you, who, a man of quality, well placed in the State, having noble blood to shed in a noble cause, Viscount of this Tower-Gauvain, Prince of Brittany, duke by right, and peer of France by heritage, which is about all a man of good sense could desire here below, amuses himself, being what he is, to be what you are; playing his part so well that he produces upon his enemies the effect of a villain, and, on his friends, of an idiot. By-the-way, give my compliments to the Abbé Cimourdain."

The marquis spoke perfectly at his ease, quietly, emphasizing nothing in his polite society voice, his eyes clear and tranquil, his hand in his waistcoat pocket. He broke off, drew a long breath, and resumed:

"I do not conceal from you that I have done what I could to kill you. Such as you see me, I have myself, in person, three times aimed a cannon at you. A discourteous proceeding—I admit it, but it would be giving rise to a bad example to suppose that in war your enemy tries to make himself agreeable to you. For we are in war, monsieur my nephew. Everything is put to fire and sword.

Into the bargain, it is true that they have killed the king. A pretty century!"

He checked himself again, and again resumed:

"When one thinks that none of these things would have happened if Voltaire had been hanged and Rousseau sent to the galleys! Ah, those men of mind—what scourges! But there, what is it you reproach that monarchy with? It is true that the Abbé Pucelle was sent to his Abbey of Portigny with as much time as he pleased for the journey, and as for your Monsieur Titon, who had been, begging your pardon, a terrible debauchee, and had gone the rounds of the loose women before hunting after the miracles of the Deacon Paris, he was transferred from the Castle of Vincennes to the Castle of Ham in Picardy, which is, I confess, a sufficiently ugly place. There are wrongs for you! I recollect—I cried out also in my day. I was as stupid as you."

The marquis felt in his pocket as if seeking his snuff-box, then continued:

"But not so wicked. We talked just for talk's sake. There was also the mutiny of demands and petitions, and then up came those gentlemen the philosophers, and their writings were burned instead of the authors; the Court cabals mixed themselves in the matter; there were all those stupid fellows, Turgot, Quesney, Malsherbes, the physiocratists, and so forth, and the quarrel began. The whole came from the scribblers and the rhymsters. The Encyclopedia! Diderot! Alembert! Ah, the wicked scoundrels! To think of a well-born man like the King of Prussia joining them. I would have suppressed all those paper-scratchers. Ah, we were justiciaries, our family! You may see there on the wall the marks of the quartering-wheel. We did not jest.

No, no; no scribblers! While there are Arouets, there will be Marats. As long as there are fellows who scribble, there will be scoundrels who assassinate; as long as there is ink, there will be black stains; as long as men's claws hold a goose's feather frivolous stupidities will engender atrocious ones. Books cause crimes. The word chimera has two meanings; it signifies dream, and it signifies monster. How dearly one pays for idle trash! What is that you sing to us about your rights? The rights of man! Rights of the people! Is that empty enough, stupid enough, visionary enough, sufficiently void of sense? When I say, Havoise, the sister of Conan II., brought the county of Brittany to Hoel, Count of Nantes and Cornwall, who left the throne to Alain Fergant, the uncle of Bertha, who espoused Alain-le-noir, Lord of Roche-sur-Yon, and bore him Conan the Little, grandfather of Guy, or Gauvain de Thouars, our ancestor, I state a thing that is clear, and there is a right. But your scoundrels, your rascals, your wretches—what do they call their rights? Deicide and regicide. Is it not hideous? Oh, the clowns! I am sorry for you, sir, but you belong to this proud Brittany blood; you and I had Gauvain de Thouars for our grandfather; we had for another grandfather that great Duke of Montbazon who was peer of France and honored with the Grand Collar, who attacked the suburb of Tours, and was wounded at the Battle of Argues, and died Master of the Hounds of France, in his house of Couzières in Touraine, aged eighty-six. I could tell you still further of the Duke de Laudunois, son of the Lady of Garnache, of Claude de Lorraine, Duke de Chevreuse, and of Henri de Lenoncourt and of Françoise de Laval-Boisdauphin. But to what purpose? Monsieur has the honor of being an idol, and considers him-

self the equal of my groom. Learn this; I was an old man while you were still a brat; I remain as much your superior as I was then. As you grew up you found means to belittle yourself. Since we ceased to see one another each has gone his own way—I followed honesty, you went in the opposite direction. Ah, I do not know how all that will finish—those gentlemen, your friends, are full-blown wretches! Verily, it is fine, I grant you—a marvelous step gained in the cause of progress! To have suppressed in the army the punishment of the pint of water inflicted on the drunken soldier for three consecutive days! To have the Maximum—the Convention—the Bishop Gobel and Monsieur Hebert—to have exterminated the Past in one mass, from the Bastille to the peerage. They replace the saints by vegetables! So be it, citizens; you are masters; reign; take your ease; do what you like; stop at nothing. All this does not hinder the fact that religion is religion, that royalty fills fifteen hundred years of our history, and that the old French nobility are loftier than you, even with their heads off. As for your caviling over the historic rights of royal races, we shrug our shoulders at that. Chilpéric, in reality, was only a monk named Daniel; it was Rainfroy who invented Chilpéric, in order to annoy Charles Martel; we know those things just as well as you do. The question does not lie there. The question is this: to be a great kingdom, to be the ancient France, to be a country perfectly ordered, wherein were considered just the sacred person of its monarchs, absolute lords of the State; then the princess; then the officers of the crown for the armies on land and sea, for the artillery, for the direction and superintendence of the finances. After that came the officers of justice, great and small; those for the

management of taxes and general receipts; and, lastly, the police of the kingdom in its three orders. All this was fine and nobly regulated; you have destroyed it. You have destroyed the provinces, like the lamentably ignorant creatures you are, without even suspecting what the provinces really were. The genius of France held the genius of the entire continent; each province of France represented a virtue of Europe; the frankness of Germany was in Picardy; the generosity of Sweden in Champagne; the industry of Holland in Burgundy; the activity of Poland in Languedoc; the gravity of Spain in Gascony; the wisdom of Italy in Provence; the subtlety of Greece in Normandy; the fidelity of Switzerland in Dauphiny. You knew nothing of all that; you have broken, shattered, ruined, demolished; you have shown yourselves simply idiotic brutes. Ah, you will no longer have nobles? Well, you shall have none. Get your mourning ready. You shall have no more paladins, no more heroes. Say good-night to the ancient grandeurs. Find me d'Assas at present! You are all of you afraid for your skins. You will have no more Chevaliers de Fontenoy, who saluted before killing one another; you will have no more combatants like those in silk stockings at the siege of Liérída; you will have no more plumes floating past like meteors; you are a people finished, come to an end; you will suffer the outrage of invasion. If Alaric II. could return, he would no longer find himself confronted by Clovis; if Abderane could come back he would not longer find himself face to face with Charles Martel; if the Saxons, they would no longer find Pepin before them. You will have no more Aguadel, Rocroy, Lens, Staffarde, Nerwinde, Steinkerque, La Marsaille, Rancoux, Lawfeld, Mahon; you will have

no Marignan with Francis I.; you will have no Bouvines with Philip Augustus taking prisoner with one hand Renaud, Count of Boulogne, and with the other, Ferrand, Count of Flanders. You will have Agincourt, but you will have no more the Sieur de Bacqueville, grand bearer of the oriflamme, enveloping himself in his banner to die. Go on—go on—do your work! Be the new men! Become dwarfs!”

The marquis was silent for an instant, then began again:

“But leave us great. Kill the kings; kill the nobles; kill the priests. Tear down; ruin; massacre; trample under foot; crush ancient laws beneath your heels; overthrow the throne; stamp upon the altar of God—dash it in pieces—dance above it! On with you to the end. You are traitors and cowards—incapable of devotion or sacrifice. I have spoken. Now have me guillotined, monsieur the viscount. I have the honor to be your very humble servant.”

Then he added:

“Ah! I do not hesitate to set the truth plainly before you. What difference can it make to me? I am dead.”

“You are free,” said Gauvain.

He unfastened his commandant's cloak, advanced toward the marquis, threw it about his shoulders, and drew the hood close down over his eyes. The two men were of the same height.

“Well, what are you doing?” the marquis asked.

Gauvain raised his voice, and cried:

“Lieutenant, open to me.”

The door opened.

Gauvain exclaimed, “Close the door carefully behind me.”

And he pushed the stupefied marquis across the threshold. The hall turned into a guard-room, was lighted, it will be

remembered, by a horn lantern, whose faint rays only broke the shadows here and there. Such of the soldiers as were not asleep saw dimly a man of lofty stature, wrapped in the mantle and hood of the commander-in-chief, pass through their midst and move toward the entrance. They made a military salute and the man passed on.

The marquis slowly traversed the guard-room, the breach—not without hitting his head more than once—and went out. The sentinel, believing that he saw Gauvain, presented arms. When he was outside, having the grass of the fields under his feet, within two hundred paces of the forest, and before him space, night, liberty, life, he paused, and stood motionless for an instant like a man who has allowed himself to be pushed on, who has yielded to surprise, and who, having taken advantage of an open door, asks himself if he has done well or ill; hesitates to go farther, and gives audience to a last reflection. After a few seconds' deep reverie he raised his right hand, snapped his thumb and little finger, and said, "My faith!" And he hurried on.

The door of the dungeon had closed again. Gauvain was within.

CHAPTER II.

THE COURT-MARTIAL.

AT that period all courts-martial were very nearly discretionary. Dumas had offered in the Assembly a rough plan of military legislation, improved later by Talot in the Council of the Five Hundred, but the definite code of war-councils was

only drawn up under the Empire. Let us add in parenthesis, that from the Empire dates the law imposed on military tribunals to commence receiving the votes by the lowest grade. Under the Revolution this law did not exist.

In 1793 the president of a military tribunal was almost the tribunal in himself. He chose the members, classed the order of grades, regulated the manner of voting; was at once master and judge.

Cimourdain had selected for the hall of the court-martial that very room on the ground-floor where the retirade had been erected, and where the guard was now established. He wished to shorten everything; the road from the prison to the tribunal, and the passage from the tribunal to the scaffold.

In conformity with his orders the court began its sitting at midday with no other show of state than this: three straw-bottomed chairs, a pine table, two lighted candles, a stool in front of the table.

The chairs were for the judges, and the stool for the accused. At either end of the table also stood a stool, one for the commissioner auditor, who was a quartermaster; the other for the registrar, who was a corporal.

On the table were a stick of red sealing-wax, a brass seal of the Republic, two inkstands, some sheets of white paper, and two printed placards spread open, the first containing the declaration of outlawry, the second the decree of the Convention.

The tri-colored flag hung on the back of the middle chair; in that period of rude simplicity decorations were quickly arranged, and it needed little time to change a guard-room into a court of justice.

The middle chair, intended for the president, stood in face of the prison door.

The soldiers made up the audience.

Two gendarmes stood on guard by the stool.

Cimourdain was seated in the centre chair, having at his right Captain Gué-champ, first judge, and at his left Sergeant Radoub, second judge.

Cimourdain wore a hat with a tri-colored cockade, his sabre at his side, and his two pistols in his belt. His scar, of a vivid red, added to his savage appearance.

Radoub's wound had been only partially staunched. He had a handkerchief knotted about his head, upon which a blood-stain slowly widened.

At midday the court had not yet opened its proceedings. A messenger, whose horse could be heard stamping outside, stood near the table of the tribunal. Cimourdain was writing—writing these lines :

"Citizen members of the Committee of Public Safety, Lantenac is taken. He will be executed to-morrow."

He dated and signed the dispatch; folded, sealed, and handed it to the messenger, who departed.

This done, Cimourdain called in a loud voice, "Open the dungeon."

The two gendarmes drew back the bolts, opened the door of the dungeon, and entered.

Cimourdain lifted his head, folded his arms, fixed his eyes on the door, and cried, "Bring out the prisoner."

A man appeared between the two gendarmes, standing beneath the arch of the door-way.

It was Gauvain.

Cimourdain started. "Gauvain!" he exclaimed.

Then he added, "I demand the prisoner."

"It is I," said Gauvain.

"Thou?"

"I."

"And Lantenac?"

"He is free."

"Free?"

"Yes."

"Escaped?"

"Escaped."

Cimourdain trembled as he stammered, "In truth, the castle belongs to him—he knows all its outlets. The dungeon may communicate with some secret opening—I ought to have remembered that he would find means to escape. He would not need any person's aid for that."

"He was aided," said Gauvain.

"To escape?"

"To escape."

"Who aided him?"

"I."

"Thou?"

"I."

"Thou art dreaming!"

"I went into the dungeon; I was alone with the prisoner; I took off my cloak; I put it about his shoulders; I drew the hood down over his face; he went out in my stead, and I remained in his. Here I am."

"Thou didst not do it!"

"I did it."

"It is impossible!"

"It is true."

"Bring me Lantenac!"

"He is no longer here. The soldiers, seeing the commandant's mantle, took him for me, and allowed him to pass. It was still night."

"Thou art mad!"

"I tell you what was done."

A silence followed. Cimourdain stammered, "Then thou hast merited—"

"Death," said Gauvain.

Cimourdain was pale as a corpse. He sat motionless as a man who had just

been struck by lightning. He no longer seemed to breathe. A great drop of sweat stood out on his forehead.

He forced his voice into firmness, and said, "Gendarmes, seat the accused."

Gauvain placed himself on the stool.

Cimourdain added: "Gendarmes, draw your sabres."

Cimourdain's voice had got back its ordinary tone.

"Accused," said he, "you will stand up."

He no longer said thee and thou to Gauvain.

CHAPTER III.

THE VOTES.

GAUVAIN rose.

"What is your name?" demanded Cimourdain.

The answer came unhesitatingly — "Gauvain."

Cimourdain continued the interrogation: "Who are you?"

"I am Commander-in-Chief of the Expeditionary Column of the Côtes-du-Nord."

"Are you a relative or a connection of the man who has escaped?"

"I am his grand-nephew."

"You are acquainted with the decree of the Convention?"

"I see the placard lying on your table."

"What have you to say in regard to this decree?"

"That I countersigned it, that I ordered its carrying out, that it was I who had this placard written, at the bottom of which is my name."

"Choose a defender."

"I will defend myself."

"You can speak."

Cimourdain had become again impassible. But his impassibility resembled the sternness of a rock rather than the calmness of a man.

Gauvain remained silent for a moment, as if collecting his thoughts.

Cimourdain spoke again. "What have you to say in your defense?"

Gauvain slowly raised his head, but without fixing his eyes upon either of the judges, and replied:

"This: one thing prevented my seeing another. A good action seen too near hid from me a hundred criminal deeds; on one side, an old man; on the other, three children; all these put themselves between me and duty. I forgot the burned villages, the ravaged fields, the butchered prisoners, the slaughtered wounded, the women shot; I forgot France betrayed to England; I set at liberty the murderer of our country. I am guilty. In speaking thus, I seem to speak against myself; it is a mistake. I speak in my own behalf. When the guilty acknowledges his fault, he saves the only thing worth the trouble of saving—honor."

"Is that," returned Cimourdain, "all you have to say in your own defense?"

"I add, that being the chief, I owed an example; and that you in your turn, being judges, owe one."

"What example do you demand?"

"My death."

"You find that first?"

"And necessary."

"Be seated."

The quarter-master, who was auditor commissioner, rose and read, first, the decree of outlawry against the *ci-devant* Marquis de Lantenac; secondly, the decree

of the Convention ordaining capital punishment against whosoever should aid the evasion of a rebel prisoner. He closed with the lines printed at the bottom of the placard, forbidding "to give aid or succor to the below-named rebel, under penalty of death;" signed, "Commander-in-Chief of the Expeditionary Column—Gauvain." These notices read, the auditor commissioner sat down again.

Cimourdain folded his arms, and said, "Accused, pay attention. Public, listen, look, and be silent. You have before you the law. The votes will now be taken. The sentence will be given according to the majority. Each judge will announce his decision aloud, in presence of the accused, justice having nothing to conceal."

Cimourdain continued: "The first judge will give his vote. Speak, Captain Guéchamp."

Captain Guéchamp seemed to see neither Cimourdain nor Gauvain. His downcast lids concealed his eyes, which remained fixed upon the placard of the decree as if they were staring at a gulf. He said:

"The law is immutable. A judge is more and less than a man; he is less than a man because he has no heart; he is more than a man because he holds the sword of justice. In the 414th year of Rome, Manlius put his son to death for the crime of having conquered without his orders. Violated discipline demanded an example. Here it is the law which has been violated, and the law is still higher than discipline. Through an emotion of pity, the country is again endangered. Pity may wear the proportions of a crime. Commandant Gauvain has helped the rebel Lantenac to escape. Gauvain is guilty. I vote—death."

"Write, registrar," said Cimourdain.

The clerk wrote, "Captain Guéchamp: death."

Gauvain's voice rang out, clear and firm.

"Guéchamp," said he, "you have voted well, and I thank you."

Cimourdain resumed:

"It is the turn of the second judge. Speak, Sergeant Radoub."

Radoub rose, turned toward Gauvain, and made the accused a military salute. Then he exclaimed:

"If that is the way it goes, then guillotine me; for I give here, before God, my most sacred word of honor that I would like to have done, first, what the old man did, and, after that, what my commandant did. When I saw that old fellow, eighty years of age, jump into the fire to pull three brats out of it, I said, 'Old fellow, you are a brave man!' And when I hear that my commandant has saved that old man from your beast of a guillotine, I say, 'My commandant, you ought to be my general, and you are a true man, and, as for me, thunder! I would give you the Cross of St. Louis if there were still crosses, or saints, or Louises. Oh, there! Are we going to turn idiots at present? If it was for these sort of things that we gained the Battle of Jemmapes, the Battle of Valmy, the Battle of Fleurens, and the Battle of Wattignies, then you had better say so. What! Here is Commandant Gauvain, who, for these four months past, has been driving those asses of Royalists to the beat of the drum, and saving the Republic by his sword, who did a thing at Dol which needed a world of brains to do; and when you have a man like that, you try to get rid of him! Instead of electing him your general, you want to cut off his head! I say it is enough to make a fellow throw himself off the Pont Neuf head foremost!

You yourself, Citizen Gauvain, my commandant, if you were my corporal instead of being my superior, I would tell you that you talked a heap of infernal nonsense just now. The old man did a fine thing in saving the children; you did a fine thing in saving the old man; and if we are going to guillotine people for good actions, why, then, get away with you all to the devil, for I don't know any longer what the question is about. There's nothing to hold fast to. It is not true, is it, all this? I pinch myself to see if I am awake! I can't understand. So the old man ought to have let the babies burn alive, and my commandant ought to have let the old man's head be cut off! See here—guillotine me. I would as lief have it done as not. A supposition! If the children had been killed, the battalion of the Bonnet Rouge would have been dishonored. Is that what was wished for? Why, then, let us eat each other up and be done. I understand politics as well as any of you—I belonged to the Club of the Section of Pikes. Zounds, we are coming to the end! I sum up the matter according to my way of looking at it. I don't like things to be done which are so puzzling you don't know any longer where you stand. What the devil is it we get ourselves killed for? In order that somebody may kill our chief! None of that, Lisette! I want my chief. I will have my chief. I love him better to-day than I did yesterday. Send him to the guillotine? Why, you make me laugh! Now we are not going to have anything of that sort. I have listened. People may say what they please. In the first place, it is not possible!"

And Radoub sat down again. His wound had re-opened. A thin stream of blood exuded from under the kerchief, and ran along his neck from the place

where his ear had been. Cimourdain turned toward the sergeant.

"You vote for the acquittal of the accused?"

"I vote," said Radoub, "that he be made general."

"I ask if you vote for his acquittal?"

"I vote for his being made head of the Republic."

"Sergeant Radoub, do you vote that Commandant Gauvain be acquitted—yes or no?"

"I vote that my head be cut off in place of his."

"Acquittal," said Cimourdain. "Write it, registrar."

The clerk wrote, "Sergeant Radoub: acquittal."

Then the clerk said—

"One voice for death. One voice for acquittal. A tie."

It was Cimourdain's turn to vote.

He rose. He took off his hat and laid it on the table.

He was no longer pale or livid. His face was the color of clay.

Had all the spectators been corpses lying there in their winding-sheets, the silence could not have been more profound.

Cimourdain said, in a solemn, slow, firm voice:

"Accused, the case has been heard. In the name of the Republic, the court-martial, by a majority of two voices—"

He broke off; there was an instant of terrible suspense. Did he hesitate before pronouncing the sentence of death? Did he hesitate before granting life? Every listener held his breath.

Cimourdain continued:

"Condemns you to death."

His face expressed the torture of an awful triumph. Jacob, when he forced the angel, whom he had overthrown in

the darkness, to bless him, must have worn that fearful smile.

It was only a gleam—it passed. Cimourdain was marble again. He seated himself, put on his hat, and added, “Gauvain, you will be executed to-morrow at sunrise.”

Gauvain rose, saluted, and said, “I thank the Court.”

“Lead away the condemned,” said Cimourdain.

He made a sign; the doof of the dungeon re-opened; Gauvain entered; the door closed. The two gendarmes stood sentinel—one on either side of the arch, sabre in hand.

Sergeant Radoub fell senseless upon the ground, and was carried away.

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER CIMOURDAIN THE JUDGE COMES CIMOURDAIN THE MASTER.

A CAMP is a wasp's nest. In revolutionary times above all. The civic sting which is in the soldier moves quickly, and does not hesitate to prick the chief after having chased away the enemy. The valiant troop which had taken La Tourgue was filled with diverse commotions; at first against Commandant Gauvain when it learned that Lantenac had escaped. As Gauvain issued from the dungeon which had been believed to hold the marquis, the news spread as if by electricity, and in an instant the whole army was informed. A murmur burst forth; it was: “They are trying Gauvain. But it is a sham. Trust ci-devants and priests! We have just seen a vis-

count save a marquis, and now we are going to see a priest absolve a noble!”

When the news of Gauvain's condemnation came, there was a second murmur:

“It is horrible! Our chief, our brave chief, our young commander—a hero! He may be a viscount—very well; so much the more merit in his being a Republican. What, he, the liberator of Pontorsin, of Villedieu, of Pont-au-Beau! The conqueror of Dol and La Tourgue! He who makes us invincible. He, the sword of the Republic in Vendée! The man who, for five months, has held the Chouans at bay, and repaired all the blunders of Léchelle and the others! This Cimourdain to dare condemn him to death! For what? Because he saved an old man who had saved three children! A priest kill a soldier!”

Thus muttered the victorious and discontented camp. A stern rage surrounded Cimourdain. Four thousand men against one—that should seem a power; it is not. These four thousand men were a crowd; Cimourdain was a will. It was known that Cimourdain's frown came easily, and nothing more was needed to hold the army in respect. In those stern days it was sufficient for a man to have behind him the shadow of the Committee of Public Safety to make that man formidable, to make imprecation die into a whisper, and the whisper into silence.

Before, as after the murmurs, Cimourdain remained the arbiter of Gauvain's fate as he did of the fate of all. They knew there was nothing to ask of him, that he would only obey his conscience—a superhuman voice audible to his ear alone. Everything depended upon him. That which he had done as martial judge, he could undo as civil delegate. He only could show mercy. He possessed unlimited power: by a sign he could set Gau-

vain at liberty; he was master of life and death; he commanded the guillotine. In this tragic moment he was the man supreme.

They could only wait. Night came.

CHAPTER V.

THE DUNGEON.

THE hall of justice had become again a guard-room; the guard was doubled as upon the previous evening; two sentinels stood on duty before the closed door of the prison.

Toward midnight, a man who held a lantern in his hand traversed the hall, made himself known to the sentries, and ordered the dungeon open. It was Cimourdain.

He entered, and the door remained ajar behind him. The dungeon was dark and silent. Cimourdain moved forward a step in the gloom, set the lantern on the ground, and stood still. He could hear amidst the shadows the measured breath of a sleeping man. Cimourdain listened thoughtfully to this peaceful sound.

Gauvain lay on a bundle of straw at the farther end of the dungeon. It was his breathing which caught the new-comer's ear. He was sleeping profoundly.

Cimourdain advanced as noiselessly as possible, moved close, and looked down upon Gauvain; the glance of a mother watching her nursling's slumber could not have been more tender or fuller of love. Even Cimourdain's will could not control that glance. He pressed his clenched hands against his eyes with the gesture one sometimes sees in children, and re-

mained for a moment motionless. Then he knelt, softly raised Gauvain's hand, and pressed his lips upon it.

Gauvain stirred. He opened his eyes full of the wonder of sudden waking. He recognized Cimourdain in the dim light which the lantern cast about the cave.

"Ah," said he, "it is you, my master."

And he added, "I dreamed that Death was kissing my hand."

Cimourdain started as one does sometimes under the sudden rush of a flood of thoughts. Sometimes the tide is so high and so stormy that it seems as if it would drown the soul.

Not an echo from the overcharged depths of Cimourdain's heart found vent in words. He could only say, "Gauvain!"

And the two gazed at one another; Cimourdain with his eyes full of those flames which burn up tears; Gauvain with his sweetest smile.

Gauvain raised himself on his elbow, and said:

"That scar I see on your face is the sabre-cut you received for me. Yesterday, too, you were in the thick of that *mêlée*, at my side, and on my account. If Providence had not placed you near my cradle, where should I be to-day? In outer darkness. If I have my conception of duty, it is from you that it comes to me. I was born with my hands bound. Prejudices are ligatures—you loosened those bonds; you gave my growth liberty, and of that which was already only a mummy, you made anew a child. Into what would have been an abortion you put a conscience. Without you I should have grown up a dwarf. I exist by you. I was only a lord, you made me a citizen; I was only a citizen, you have made me a mind; you have made me, as a man, fit for this earthly life; you have educated my soul

for the celestial existence. You have given me human reality, the key of truth, and, to go beyond that, the key of light. Oh, my master! I thank you. It is you who have created me."

Cimourdain seated himself on the straw beside Gauvain, and said, "I have come to sup with thee."

Gauvain broke the black bread and handed it to him. Cimourdain took a morsel; then Gauvain offered the jug of water.

"Drink first," said Cimourdain.

Gauvain drank, and passed the jug to his companion, who drank after him. Gauvain had only swallowed a mouthful. Cimourdain drank great draughts.

During this supper, Gauvain ate, and Cimourdain drank; a sign of the calmness of the one, and of the fever which consumed the other.

A serenity so strange that it was terrible reigned in this dungeon. The two men conversed.

Gauvain said, "Grand events are sketching themselves. What the Revolution does at this moment is mysterious. Behind the visible work stands the invisible. One conceals the other. The visible work is savage, the invisible sublime. In this instant I perceive all very clearly. It is strange and beautiful. It has been necessary to make use of the materials of the Past. Hence this marvelous '93. Beneath a scaffolding of barbarism, a temple of civilization is building."

"Yes," replied Cimourdain. "From this provisional will rise the definitive. The definitive—that is to say, right and duty—are parallel; taxes proportional and progressive; military service obligatory; a leveling without deviation; and above the whole, making part of all, that straight line, the law. The Republic is the absolute."

"I prefer," said Gauvain, "the ideal Republic."

He paused for an instant, then continued: "Oh, my master! in all which you have just said, where do you place devotion, sacrifice, abnegation, the sweet interlacing of kindnesses, love? To set all in equilibrium, it is well; to put all in harmony is better. Above the balance is the lyre. Your Republic weighs, measures, regulates man; mine lifts him into the open sky; it is the difference between a theorem and an eagle."

"You lose yourself in the clouds."

"And you in calculation."

"Harmony is full of dreams."

"There are such, too, in algebra."

"I would have man made by the rules of Euclid."

"And I," said Gauvain, "would like him better as pictured by Homer."

Cimourdain's severe smile remained fixed upon Gauvain, as if to hold that soul steady.

"Poesy! Mistrust poets."

"Yes, I know that saying. Mistrust the zephyrs, mistrust the sunshine, mistrust the sweet odors of spring, mistrust the flowers, mistrust the stars!"

"None of these things can feed man."

"How do you know? Thought is nourishment. To think is to eat."

"No abstractions! The Republic is the law of two and two make four. When I have given to each the share which belongs to him—"

"It still remains to give the share which does not belong to him."

"What do you understand by that?"

"I understand the immense reciprocal concession which each owes to all, and which all owe to each, and which is the whole of social life."

"Beyond the strict law there is nothing."

"There is everything."

"I only see justice."

"And I—I look higher."

"What can there be above justice?"

"Equity."

At certain instants they paused as if lightning flashes suddenly chilled them.

Cimourdain resumed: "Particularize; I defy you."

"So be it. You wish military service made obligatory. Against whom? Against other men. I—I would have no military service. I want peace. You wish the wretched succored; I wish an end put to suffering. You want proportional taxes; I wish no tax whatever. I wish the general expense reduced to its most simple expression, and paid by the social surplus."

"What do you understand by that?"

"This: first suppose parasitisms—the parasitisms of the priest, the judge, the soldier. After that turn your riches to account. You fling manure into the sewer; cast it into the furrow. Three parts of the soil are waste land; clear up France; suppress useless pasture-grounds; divide the communal lands. Let each man have a farm and each farm a man. You will increase a hundred-fold the social product. At this moment France only gives her peasants meat four days in the year; well cultivated, she would nourish three hundred millions of men—all Europe. Utilize nature, that immense auxiliary so disdained. Make every wind toil for you, every water-fall, every magnetic effluence. The globe has a subterranean net-work of veins; there is in this net-work a prodigious circulation of water, oil, fire. Pierce those veins: make this water feed your fountains, this oil your lamps, this fire your hearths. Reflect upon the movements of the waves, their flux and reflux, the ebb and flow of the tides. What is the ocean? An enor-

mous power allowed to waste. How stupid is earth not to make use of the sea!"

"There you are in the full tide of dreams."

"That is to say, of full reality."

Gauvain added, "And woman? what will you do with her?"

Cimourdain replied, "Leave her where she is; the servant of man."

"Yes. On one condition."

"What?"

"That man shall be the servant of woman."

"Can you think of it?" cried Cimourdain. "Man a servant? Never! Man is master. I admit only one royalty—that of the fireside. Man in his house is king!"

"Yes. On one condition."

"What?"

"That woman shall be queen there."

"That is to say, you wish man and woman—"

"Equality."

"Equality! Can you dream of it? The two creatures are different."

"I said equality; I did not say identity."

There was another pause, like a sort of truce between two spirits flinging lightnings. Cimourdain broke the silence: "And the offspring? To whom do you consign them?"

"First to the father who engenders, then to the mother who gives birth, then to the master who rears, then to the city that civilizes, then to the country which is the mother supreme, then to humanity, who is the great ancestor."

"You do not speak of God?"

"Each of those degrees—father, mother, master, city, country, humanity—is one of the rungs in the ladder which leads to God."

Cimourdain was silent.

Gauvain continued: "When one is at the top of the ladder, one has reached God. Heaven opens—one has only to enter."

Cimourdain made a gesture like a man calling another back. "Gauvain, return to earth. We wish to realize the possible."

"Do not commence by rendering it impossible."

"The possible always realizes itself."

"Not always. If one treats Utopia harshly, one slays it. Nothing is more defenseless than the egg."

"Still it is necessary to seize Utopia, to put the yoke of the real upon it, to frame it in the actual. The abstract idea must transform itself into the concrete; what it loses in beauty, it will gain in usefulness; it is lessened, but made better. Right must enter into law, and when right makes itself law, it becomes absolute. That is what I call the possible."

"The possible is more than that."

"Ah! there you are in dream-land again!"

"The possible is a mysterious bird, always soaring above man's head."

"It must be caught."

"Living."

Gauvain continued: "This my thought: Constant progression. If God had meant man to retrograde, he would have placed an eye in the back of his head. Let us look always toward the dawn, the blossoming, the birth; that which falls encourages that which mounts. The cracking of the old tree is an appeal to the new. Each century must do its work; to-day civic, to-morrow human. To-day, the question of right; to-morrow, the question of salary. Salary and right—the same word at bottom. Man does

not live to be paid nothing. In giving life, God contracts a debt. Right is the payment inborn; payment is right acquired."

Gauvain spoke with the earnestness of a prophet. Cimourdain listened. Their rôles were changed; now it seemed the pupil who was master.

Cimourdain murmured: "You go rapidly."

"Perhaps because I am a little pressed for time," said Gauvain, smiling. And he added, "Oh, my master! behold the difference between our two Utopias. You wish the garrison obligatory, I the school. You dream of man, the soldier; I dream of man, the citizen. You want him terrible; I want him a thinker. You found a Republic upon swords; I found—"

He interrupted himself, "I would found a Republic of intellects."

Cimourdain bent his eyes on the pavement of the dungeon, and said, "And while waiting for it, what would you have?"

"That which is."

"Then you absolve the present moment?"

"Yes."

"Wherefore?"

"Because it is a tempest. A tempest knows always what it does. For one oak uprooted, how many forests purified! Civilization had the plague, this great wind cures it. Perhaps it is not so careful as it ought to be. But could it do otherwise than it does? It is charged with a difficult task. Before the horror of miasma, I comprehend the fury of the blast."

Gauvain continued:

"Moreover, why should I fear the tempest if I have my compass? How can events affect me if I have my conscience?"

And he added, in a low, solemn voice :
 "There is a power that must always be allowed to guide."

"What?" demanded Cimourdain.

Gauvain raised his finger above his head. Cimourdain's eyes followed the direction of that uplifted finger, and it seemed to him that across the dungeon vault he beheld the starlit sky.

Both were silent again.

Cimourdain spoke first.

"Society is greater than Nature. I tell you, this is no longer possibility—it is a dream."

"It is the goal. Otherwise of what use is Society? Remain in Nature. Be savages. Otaheite is a paradise. Only the inhabitants of that paradise do not think. An intelligent hell would be preferable to an imbruted heaven. But no—no hell. Let us be a human society. Greater than Nature? Yes. If you add nothing to Nature, why go beyond her? Content yourself with work, like the ant; with honey, like the bee. Remain the working drudge instead of the queen intelligence. If you add to Nature, you necessarily become greater than she; to add is to augment; to augment is to grow. Society is Nature sublimated. I want all that is lacking to bee-hives, all that is lacking to ant-hills—monuments, arts, poesy, heroes, genius. To bear eternal burdens is not the destiny of man. No, no, no; no more pariahs, no more slaves, no more convicts, no more damned! I desire that each of the attributes of man should be a symbol of civilization and a patron of progress; I would place liberty before the spirit, equality before the heart, fraternity before the soul. No more yokes! Man was made not to drag chains, but to soar on wings. No more of man reptile. I wish the transfiguration of the larva into

the winged creature; I wish the worm of the earth to turn into a living flower and fly away. I wish—"

He broke off. His eyes blazed. His lips moved. He ceased to speak.

The door had remained open. Sounds from without penetrated into the dungeon. The distant peal of trumpets could be heard, probably the reveille; then the butt-end of muskets striking the ground as the sentinels were relieved; then, quite near the tower, as well as one could judge, a noise like the moving of planks and beams; followed by muffled, intermittent echoes like the strokes of a hammer.

Cimourdain grew pale as he listened. Gauvain heard nothing. His reverie became more and more profound. He seemed no longer to breathe, so lost was he in the vision that shone upon his soul. Now and then he started slightly. The morning which illuminated his eyes waxed grander.

Some time passed thus. Then Cimourdain asked—

"Of what are you thinking?"

"Of the Future," replied Gauvain.

He sank back into his meditation. Cimourdain rose from the bed of straw where the two were sitting. Gauvain did not perceive it. Keeping his eyes fixed upon the dreamer, Cimourdain moved slowly backward toward the door and went out. The dungeon closed again.



WHEN THE SUN ROSE.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN THE SUN ROSE.

DAY broke along the horizon. And with the day, an object, strange, motionless, mysterious, which the birds of heaven did not recognize, appeared upon the plateau of La Torgue and towered above the Forest of Fougères.

It had been placed there in the night. It seemed to have sprung up rather than to have been built. It lifted high against the horizon a profile of straight, hard lines, looking like a Hebrew letter or one of those Egyptian hieroglyphics which made part of the alphabet of the ancient enigma.

At the first glance the idea which this object roused was its lack of keeping with the surroundings. It stood amidst the blossoming heath. One asked one's self for what purpose it could be useful? Then the beholder felt a chill creep over him as he gazed. It was a sort of trestle having four posts for feet. At one end of the trestle two tall joists upright and straight, and fastened together at the top by a cross-beam, raised and held suspended some triangular object which showed black against the blue sky of morning. At the other end of the staging was a ladder. Between the joists, and directly beneath the triangle, could be seen a sort of panel composed of two movable sections which, fitting into each other, left a round hole about the size of a man's neck. The upper section of this panel slid in a groove, so that it could be hoisted or lowered at will. For the time, the two crescents, which formed the circle when closed, were drawn apart. At the foot of the two posts supporting the triangle was a plank turning on hinges, looking like a see-saw.

By the side of this plank was a long basket, and between the two beams, in front and at the extremity of the trestle, a square basket. The monster was painted red. The whole was made of wood except the triangle—that was iron. One would have known the thing must have been constructed by man, it was so ugly and evil-looking; at the same time it was so formidable that it might have been reared there by evil genii.

This shapeless thing was the guillotine.

In front of it, a few paces off, another monster rose out of the ravine—La Tourgue. A monster of stone rising up to hold companionship with the monster of wood. For when man has touched wood or stone they no longer remain inanimate matter; something of man's spirit seems to enter into them. An edifice is a dogma; a machine an idea. La Tourgue was that terrible offspring of the Past, called the Bastile in Paris, the Tower of London in England, the Spielberg in Germany, the Escorial in Spain, the Kremlin in Moscow, the Castle of Saint Angelo in Rome.

In La Tourgue were condensed fifteen hundred years—the Middle Age—vassalage, servitude, feudality; in the guillotine, one year—'93, and these twelve months made a counterpoise to those fifteen centuries.

La Tourgue was Monarchy; the guillotine was Revolution. Tragic confrontation!

On one side the debtor, on the other the creditor.

On one side the inextricable Gothic complication of serf, lord, slave, master, plebeian, nobility, the complex code ramifying into customs; judge and priest in coalition, shackles innumerable, fiscal impositions, excise laws, mortmain, taxes, exemptions,

prerogatives, prejudices, fanaticisms, the royal privilege of bankruptcy, the sceptre, the throne, the regal will, the divine right; the other, a unit—the knife.

On one side the knout; on the other the axe.

La Tourgue had long stood alone in the midst of this wilderness. There she had frowned with her machicolated casements, from whence had streamed boiling oil, blazing pitch, and melted lead; her oubliettes paved with human skeletons; her torture-chamber; the whole hideous tragedy with which she was filled. Rearing her funereal front above the forest, she had passed fifteen centuries of savage tranquillity amidst its shadows; she had been the one power in this land, the one object of respect and fear; she had reigned supreme; she had been the realization of barbarism, and suddenly she saw rise before her and against her, something (more than a thing—a being) as terrible as herself—the guillotine.

Inanimate objects sometimes appear endowed with a strange power of sight. A statue notices, a tower watches, the face of an edifice contemplates. La Tourgue seemed to be studying the guillotine. She seemed to question herself concerning it. What was that object? It looked as if it had sprung out of the earth. It was from there, in truth, that it had risen.

The sinister tree had germinated in the fatal ground. Out of the soil watered by so much of human sweat, so many tears, so much blood—out of the earth in which had been dug so many trenches, so many graves, so many caverns, so many ambushes—out of this earth wherein had rolled the countless victims of countless tyrannies—out of this earth spread above so many abysses wherein had been buried so many crimes (terrible germs) had

sprung in a destined day this unknown, this avenger, this ferocious sword-bearer, and '93 had said to the Old World, "Behold me!"

And the guillotine had the right to say to the donjon tower, "I am thy daughter."

And, at the same time, the tower—for those fatal objects possess a strange vitality—felt herself slain by this newly-risen force.

Before this formidable apparition La Tourgue seemed to shudder. One might have said that she was afraid. The monstrous mass of granite was majestic, but infamous; that plank with its black triangle was worse. The all-powerful fallen, trembled before the all-powerful risen. Criminal history was studying judicial history. The violence of by-gone days was comparing itself with the violence of the present; the ancient fortress, the ancient prison, the ancient seigneurie where tortured victims had shrieked out their lives; that construction of war and murder, now useless, defenseless, violated, dismantled, uncrowned, a heap of stones with no more than a heap of ashes, hideous yet magnificent, dying, dizzy with the awful memories of all those by-gone centuries, watched the terrible living Present sweep up. Yesterday trembled before to-day; antique ferocity acknowledged and bowed its head before this fresh horror. The power which was sinking into nothingness opened eyes of fright upon this new-born terror. Expiring despotism stared at this spectral avenger.

Nature is pitiless; she never withdraws her flowers, her music, her joyousness, and her sunlight from before human cruelty or suffering. She overwhelms man by the contrast between divine beauty and social hideousness. She spares him nothing of her loveliness, neither butter-

fly nor bird. In the midst of murder, vengeance, barbarism, he must feel himself watched by holy things; he can not escape the immense reproach of universal nature and the implacable serenity of the sky. The deformity of human laws is forced to exhibit itself naked amidst the dazzling rays of eternal beauty. Man breaks and destroys; man lays waste; man kills; but the summer remains summer; the lily remains the lily; the star remains a star.

Never had a morning dawned fresher and more glorious than this. A soft breeze stirred the heath, a warm haze rose amidst the branches; the Forest of Fougères, permeated by the breath of hidden brooks, smoked in the dawn like a vast censer filled with perfumes; the blue of the firmament, the whiteness of the clouds, the transparency of the streams, the verdure, that harmonious gradation of color from aqua-marine to emerald, the groups of friendly trees, the mats of grass, the peaceful fields, all breathed that purity which is Nature's eternal counsel to man.

In the midst of all this rose the horrible front of human shamelessness; in the midst of all this appeared the fortress and the scaffold, war and punishment; the incarnations of the bloody age and the bloody moment; the owl of the night of the Past and the bat of the cloud-darkened dawn of the Future. And blossoming, odor-giving creation, loving and charming, and the grand sky golden with morning spread about La Tourgue and the guillotine, and seemed to say to man, "Behold my work and yours." Such are the terrible reproaches of the sunlight!

This spectacle had its spectators.

The four thousand men of the little expeditionary army were drawn up in battle order upon the plateau. They surrounded

the guillotine on three sides in such a manner as to form about it the shape of a letter E; the battery placed in the centre of the largest line made the notch of the E. The red monster was inclosed by these three battle fronts; a sort of wall of soldiers spread out on two sides to the edge of the plateau; the fourth side, left open, was the ravine, which seemed to frown at La Tourgue.

These arrangements made a long square, in the centre of which stood the scaffold. Gradually, as the sun mounted higher, the shadow of the guillotine grew shorter on the turf.

The gunners were at their pieces; the matches lighted.

A faint blue smoke rose from the ravine—the last breath of the expiring conflagration.

This cloud encircled without veiling La Tourgue, whose lofty platform overlooked the whole horizon. There was only the width of the ravine between the platform and the guillotine. The one could have parleyed with the other. The table of the tribunal and the chair shadowed by the tri-colored flags had been set upon the platform. The sun rose higher behind La Tourgue, bringing out the black mass of the fortress clear and defined, and revealing upon its summit the figure of a man in the chair beneath the banners, sitting motionless, his arms crossed upon his breast. It was Cimourdain. He wore, as on the previous day, his civil delegate's dress; on his head was the hat with the tri-colored cockade; his sabre at his side; his pistols in his belt. He sat silent. The whole crowd was mute. The soldiers stood with downcast eyes, musket in hand—stood so close that their shoulders touched, but no one spoke. They were meditating confusedly upon this war; the numberless combats, the hedge-fusillades

so bravely confronted; the hosts of peasants driven back by their might; the citadels taken, the battles won, the victories gained, and it seemed to them as if all that glory had turned now to their shame. A sombre expectation contracted every heart. They could see the executioner come and go upon the platform of the guillotine. The increasing splendor of the morning filled the sky with its majesty.

Suddenly the sound of muffled drums broke the stillness. The funereal tones swept nearer. The ranks opened—a cortege entered the square and moved toward the scaffold.

First, the drummers with their crape-wreathed drums; then a company of grenadiers with lowered muskets; then a platoon of gendarmes with drawn sabres; then the condemned — Gauvain. He walked forward with a free, firm step. He had no fetters on hands or feet. He was in an undress uniform, and wore his sword. Behind him marched another platoon of gendarmes.

Gauvain's face was still lighted by that pensive joy which had illuminated it at the moment when he said to Cimourdain, "I am thinking of the Future." Nothing could be more touching and sublime than that smile.

When he reached the fatal square, his first glance was directed toward the summit of the tower. He disdained the guillotine. He knew that Cimourdain would make it an imperative duty to assist at the execution. His eyes sought the platform. He saw him there.

Cimourdain was ghastly and cold. Those standing near him could not catch even the sound of his breathing. Not a tremor shook his frame when he saw Gauvain.

Gauvain moved toward the scaffold.

As he walked on, he looked at Cimourdain, and Cimourdain looked at him. It seemed as if Cimourdain rested his very soul upon that clear glance.

Gauvain reached the foot of the scaffold. He ascended it. The officer who commanded the grenadiers followed him. He unfastened his sword, and handed it to the officer; he undid his cravat, and gave it to the executioner.

He looked like a vision. Never had he been so handsome. His brown curls floated in the wind; at the time it was not the custom to cut off the hair of those about to be executed. His white neck reminded one of a woman; his heroic and sovereign glance made one think of an archangel. He stood there on the scaffold lost in thought. That place of punishment was a height too. Gauvain stood upon it, erect, proud, tranquil. The sunlight streamed about him till he seemed to stand in the midst of a halo.

But he must be bound. The executioner advanced, cord in hand.

At this moment, when the soldiers saw their young leader so close to the knife, they could restrain themselves no longer; the hearts of those stern warriors gave way.

A mighty sound swelled up—the united sob of a whole army. A clamor rose: "Mercy! mercy!"

Some fell upon their knees; others flung away their guns and stretched their arms toward the platform where Cimourdain was seated. One grenadier pointed to the guillotine, and cried, "A substitute! A substitute! Take me!"

All repeated frantically, "Mercy! mercy!" Had a troop of lions heard, they must have been softened or terrified; the tears of soldiers are terrible.

The executioner hesitated, no longer knowing what to do.

Then a voice, quick and low, but so stern that it was audible to every ear, spoke from the top of the tower—

“Fulfill the law!”

All recognized that inexorable tone. Cimourdain had spoken. The army shuddered.

The executioner hesitated no longer. He approached, holding out the cord.

“Wait!” said Gauvain.

He turned toward Cimourdain, made a gesture of farewell with his right hand, which was still free, then allowed himself to be bound.

When he was tied he said to the executioner—

“Pardon. One instant more.”

And he cried—

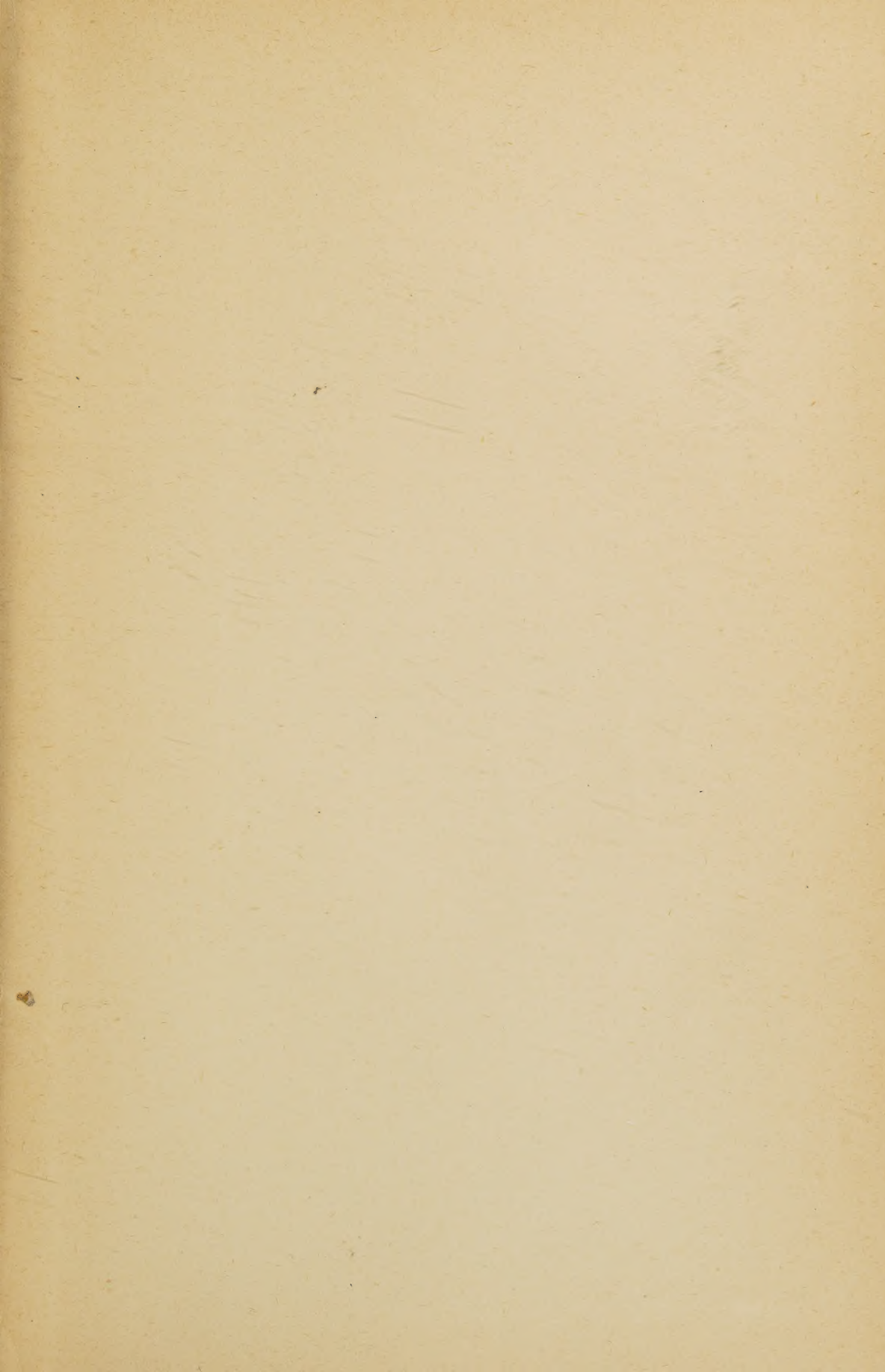
“Live the Republic!”

He was laid upon the plank. That noble head was held by the infamous yoke. The executioner gently parted his hair aside, then touched the spring. The triangle began to move—slowly at first—then rapidly—a terrible blow was heard—

At the same instant another report sounded. A pistol-shot had answered the blow of the axe. Cimourdain had seized one of the pistols from his belt, and, as Gauvain’s head rolled into the basket, Cimourdain sank back pierced to the heart by a bullet his own hand had fired. A stream of blood burst from his mouth; he fell dead.

And those two souls, united still in that tragic death, soared away together, the shadow of the one mingled with the radiance of the other.

THE END OF VOLUME IV.



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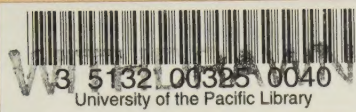
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